Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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DPS beefs up patrols vs rampant robberies. PAGE 3
Koblerville youth center seeks PC donations. PAGE 5

Disaster declaration extended

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

The Commonwealth will remain under a state of disaster emergency for another 30 days, according to a declaration signed by Gov. Benigno R. Fitial yesterday.

Fitial

The governor said the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. continues to be unable to provide power generation service to the CNMI, and this condition poses an "extreme, immediate, and imminent threat" to the Commonwealth.

"This declaration of a state of disaster emergency is made after finding that the justifications that existed for the declaration of a state of disaster emergency issued on Dec. 5, 2007, remain in existence and that the emergency measures

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A WINDY DAY AT THE BEACH JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ
Windsurfers take advantage of the gusty wind on the clear blue waters of Micro Beach yesterday.

AP
Democratic presidential hopeful, Sen. Barack Obama D-Ill., celebrates with his supporters after his victory in the Iowa caucus Thursday, Jan. 3, 2008, in Des Moines, Iowa.

Obama and Huckabee sweep to Iowa victories

By DAVID ESPO and MIKE GLOVER
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITERS

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP)— Sen. Barack Obama swept to victory in the Iowa caucuses Thursday night, pushing Hillary Rodham Clinton to third place and taking a major stride in a historic bid to become the nation's first black president. Mike Huckabee rode a wave of support from evangelical Christians to win the opening round among Republicans in the 2008 campaign for the White House.

Obama, 46 and a first-term

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RELATED NEWS
- Clinton unbowed by third-place finish. **PAGE 10**
- Biden to abandon presidential bid. **PAGE 10**
- Giuliani praises Huckabee's win in Iowa. **PAGE 10**

Saipan gaming proposal back in House

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

The Saipan gaming proposal is back in the House of Representatives for reconsideration.

The legislative body voted yesterday to reject House Local Bill 15-78 as a local matter. The measure now becomes a House bill that requires approval by both the House and the Senate.

The vote came after Tinian Rep. Edwin Aldan raised concern about the apparent attempt by some Saipan lawmakers to maneuver around the bill's pre-

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OPINION METER
This week's poll:
What's your level of optimism for 2008?
Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

INSIDE

Kenya Mayhem
Police used tear gas, water cannons and batons to block thousands of people from protesting Kenya's disputed election.

WORLD...Page 11

Peso Surges
The Philippine peso traded to as high as 41.01 per dollar, its strongest level since March 2000.

MAHARLIKA...Page 12

Sober Lindsay
Lindsay Lohan rang in the New Year drinking champagne in Italy, but is "back on track" in terms of sobriety.

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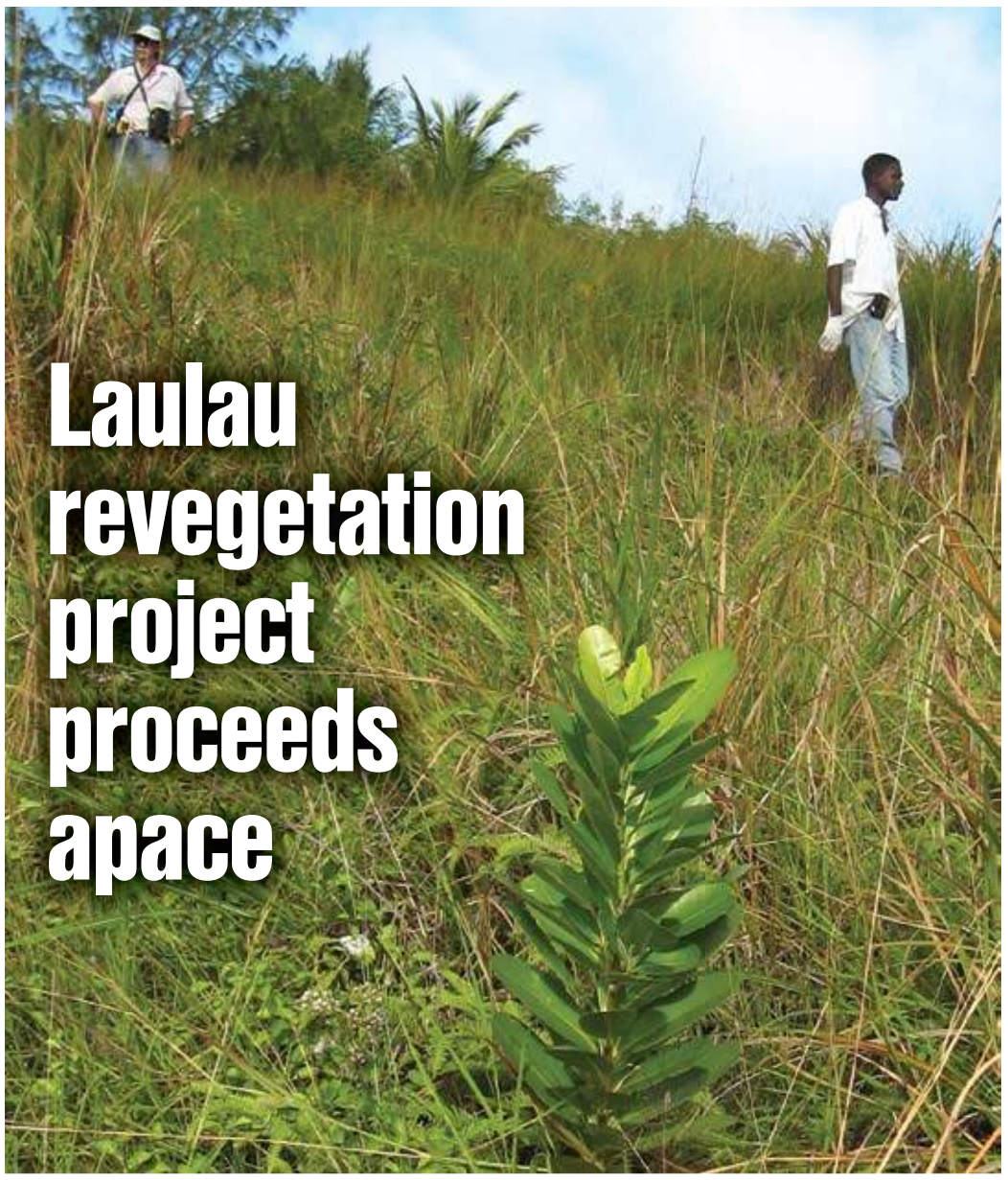
Local



Laulau revegetation project proceeds apace

By ANGELO VILLAGOMEZ
CORRESPONDENT

Over 200 local volunteers spent several weekends during summer 2006 hiking up the steep hillsides of the Laulau Watershed to plant several hundred native saplings in the first phase of the Laulau revegetation project. The goal of the three-phase project is to reforest the bare hillsides above Laulau Bay.

The project is set to continue in 2008.

The Laulau revegetation site comprises 9.6 hectares (23.7 acres) of highly acidic Akina Badlands complex volcanic soils. The area has been deforested for decades by local hunters burning the hillsides to attract deer.

The site has an average annual rainfall of 80 to 90 inches per year. Runoff of stormwater is rapid due to the steep hillsides, and the hazard of water erosion is severe. When the hillside erodes into Laulau Bay, it clouds the water and covers the reef, killing the sunlight-dependant coral. Studies conducted by the Coral Resources Management Office and Division of Environmental Quality have shown that there has been a significant decline in the Laulau coral cover in the last several years.

A sapling grows amid the tangle of grass and brush at the LauLay revegetation site.
ANGELO VILLAGOMEZ

The objectives of the Laulau revegetation plan, written in 2005 by USDA NRCS, are

(1) to stabilize the soils in the Laulau Watershed through revegetation and soil bioengineering techniques;

(2) to protect the Laulau Bay marine environment from sediment in stormwater runoff;

(3) to control and prevent the damage to the plants from wild fires; and

(4) to promote wildlife twofold by planting trees: to enhance upland wildlife through the increase of habitat, food, and shelter; and to improve marine wildlife, such as sea turtles and coral, by reducing sedimentation from runoff.

Volunteers from the Boy Scouts of America, RC&D, CRM, DEQ, Forestry, the former MOVER, local families, the Office of Rep. Cinta M. Kaipat, Earth Team, and Beautify CNMI participated in the plantings of 2006.

The volunteers planted seven acres of saplings. Over 800 seedlings consisting of nine native species were planted and nearly 5,000 native seeds were broadcast, including three garbage bags full of softball sized *putting* seeds, all of which sprouted. Several hundred cuttings of *Hibiscus tiliaceus* were also placed in the ground.

The year 2006 encompassed Phase I of a three-phase revegetation planting plan funded by NOAA and coordinated by the CNMI Watershed Group, which includes several government agencies and community groups. The NOAA grant allowed for the expansion of the CNMI Forestry nursery and paid for planting equipment and supplies. Several of the Watershed Group members also donated in-kind services and supplies.

The last planting occurred in September 2006. Since then the trees have been monitored to see what does well and what doesn't do well. The Watershed Group will use information from these observations to determine what trees to plant in Phases two and three. After planting, the most important aspect of the revegetation project is to keep it from burning.

"All this time, money, and effort will have been wasted if someone burns the hillside again," warned RC&D coordinator Ken Kramer.

The area has not experienced a burn since May 2006, two months before the first planting.

The Revegetation site is currently mostly being used for field trips and hiking, but planting is set to continue in 2008. CNMI Forestry is propagating trees to be planted at the revegetation site during the onset of the rainy season. People interested in participating in plantings can call the PTI sponsored Beautify CNMI volunteer line at 285-6462.

Angelo Villagomez is the Executive Director of MINA

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January 5, 2008 @
3pm to 5pm
Joeten Hafa Adai
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Semi finalist winners need not be present and will be contacted for more details.
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see posters for more details
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Dice to make a comeback at Power99

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
REPORTER

Christie "Dice" Kileleman Hix will be coming back to Saipan and serve as CNMI's Power 99 new program director come Jan. 11.

Dice will be replacing Charles Dancoe who will be leaving the station to pursue off-island opportunities.

According to Sorensen Media Group general manager Tina Palacios, Dice was the ideal choice for the post because she has been working with the Sorensen Media Group since 2002. That, and "she's native Saipanese, so we have a homegrown product, and that is always a good thing."

Dice will be replacing Charles "Daddy Long Legz" Dancoe.

Dice moved to Guam in mid-2007 to join the Power 98 team and hosted the midday show before being offered the job as program director for Power 99.

Before becoming one of CNMI's household names, Dice was discovered while working at a tool store by vice president of CNMI operations Curtis Dancoe.

"I was working for Ace Hardware in Saipan and one day I was on the intercom and Curtis heard me. My boss at the time came looking for me. I asked him if I was getting fired and he told me, 'no' but that Curtis heard me and wanted to talk to me about possibly working for Power 99 … and the rest is history," Dice said.

Sorensen Media Group's 15-year veteran Albert John will also join the CNMI operations.

Palacios said John will be helping out Dice with Power 99 and "will also be in charge of The Rock."

Palacios added that The Rock will go through major changes as well as far as formatting and recruiting of on-air personalities.

"The station will play a lot of R&B, '60s, '70s … no elevator music but more upbeat music," Palacios said.

She said the group plans on making it "really big" this 2008.

"Last year was a bit slow for us, but we have huge plans for this year. The community should really be ready for what we have in store," Palacios said.

She added that the members of group will be more involved in community events. "You'll definitely be seeing a lot of us, this year. A lot!"

"We also have hats, t-shirts, pencils, stickers, and a whole lot of neat stuff for the community. We just feel that we need to give back to them for all these years making us their station of choice," Palacios said.

DPS beefs up patrols vs rampant robberies

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
REPORTER

The Department of Public Safety has been intensifying its patrol in many areas by fielding more manpower to address the alarming spike in robbery cases on the island.

In an interview with *Saipan Tribune*, DPS commissioner Rebecca Warfield said they are trying to be more visible in the villages.

"The more visible we are, the more of a deterrent factor there is," Warfield said.

Robbers struck almost monthly in 2007.

Warfield explained they have switched from a four-shift system to a three-shift system.

Under the three-shift system, the commissioner said, instead of having one police officer patrolling the various sectors, they are fielding another patrol officer in the Kagman area in addition to the one officer who has already been assigned there.

"So it's double coverage for Kagman area. And the same is true for the Koblerville area as well. And we are also staffing the Koblerville Community Center and the Kagman Community Center," she said.

Warfield said if the people need help and they don't have a phone, they can just go to these centers.

She said they are increasing the number of officers who are assigned at the Koban Station at the Paseo de Marianas in western Garapan.

In the Marpi area, Warfield said the Boating Safety Section is patrolling the Last Command Post up to Suicide Cliff where the Marianas Visitors Authority doesn't have security posts.

"We also respond when the community calls and they say this is going on in their community then we're trying to send officers out to that area," she said.

This increased patrol, Warfield said, is not just for the holiday season.

"We were considering just having the post—the patrol for the Marpi area—just during the holidays. But if our manpower situation can accommodate it and it looks like it can, then we will consider continuing with that," she said.

One charge vs man in stabbing case junked

The Superior Court has dismissed one charge filed against a man who allegedly stabbed and seriously injured another person over a lemon tree dispute.

During Thursday's preliminary hearing, associate judge David A. Wiseman said he found no probable cause to charge Valerio Saures Teregeyo with attempted aggravated assault and battery upon hearing the testimony of the witness and the arguments of counsel.

Wiseman dismissed the attempted aggravated assault and battery.

The judge, however, found probable cause to believe that the crimes of assault with a dangerous weapon and assault were committed and that the person who may have committed the offenses is Teregeyo.

Wiseman ordered the defendant to answer the charges.

The judge set the arraignment for Jan. 7 and remanded Teregeyo to the custody of the Department of Corrections.

Assistant attorney general Melissa Simms represented the government. Lawyer Bruce Berline served as counsel for the defendant.

Police said the victim, Simion Fitipol Rabauliman, also known as Jimmy, was taken to the Commonwealth Health Center where he was admitted for observation. He sustained a deep open stab wound and a cut just below the right shoulder blade.

The two other suspects—Vicente Igisaiar Teregeyo and Vincent Saures Teregeyo also known as Benji—have not been arrested yet. Valerio and Vincent are sons of Vicente Teregeyo.

Detective Juan M. Santos stated in his report that the fight happened in a land located at the Falugula in Oleai on Saipan in the morning of Dec. 18.

Santos said preliminary investigation showed that Rabauliman and his brother and nephew went to their family land in Falugula to get coconuts and lemons.

Vicente Teregeyo arrived in the area as Rabauliman was getting lemons from a lemon tree while his two companions were busy loading coconuts into their truck.

Vicente Teregeyo shouted at the victim as to why he did not ask for permission to get the lemons.

A fight followed during which Valerio Teregeyo allegedly stabbed the victim in the back with a knife. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Unpaid holiday provision scrapped

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

The unpaid holiday plan has been scrapped from the latest version of the budget bill for fiscal year 2008.

The proposal would have allowed the government not to pay non-working employees on the seven remaining legal holidays this fiscal year.

House Speaker Oscar M. Babauta said that the cost of holiday pay was funded in the budget.

"We have only seven more holidays to go, and suspending them won't make a lot of difference. Even if we pass the unpaid holidays, they won't be any help to the employees to be laid off. The Saipan delegation is already taking care of that," Babauta said.

The latest budget bill, which remains under consideration in the House, also clarifies that the salary cap waiver for executive positions would be in effect when the bill becomes law, and would only apply from that point on. Old ceilings will apply to salaries prior to the bill's enactment.

Furthermore, lawmakers offered a minor concession with regard to their office allocation. The budget for each House or Senate member has been reduced from $155,000 to $150,000. This brought the Legislature's overall budget by $145,000, from $9.15 million previously.

A maximum of $5.5 million in "cover-over" funds will be appropriated for the operations of the central government. The funds are part of the $26.4 million paid to the CNMI by the U.S. Treasury Department after the settlement of a dispute over federal taxes that the U.S. government failed to transfer—or "cover over"—to the local government. The rest of the amount have been used to pay tax refunds and rebates.

Discussion on the budget will continue in the House of Representatives today.

Jan. 9 eyed for final House session

House Speaker Oscar M. Babauta has announced a plan to have the final session for the 15th House of Representatives on Wednesday, Jan. 9.

The sine die adjournment will end the two-year term of current House members.

Babauta said a Wednesday end-of-session will allow members to prepare for the entrance of the 16th House of Representatives, which will take its oath of office the following Monday, Jan. 14.

He also expressed confidence that the fiscal year 2008 budget would be finalized before Wednesday.

Once the House adjourns sine die, it will no longer be able to act on any legislation.

Nine of the current House members will be coming back for the 16th House. They are Reps. Arnold I. Palacios, Ramon Tebuteb, Stanley Torres, Francisco Dela Cruz, Edwin Aldan, Ray Yumul, Justo Quitigua, Joseph Deleon Guerrero, and Babauta.

Joining them are Representatives-elect David Apatang, Diego Benavente, Joseph Reyes, Tina Sablan, Ralph Torres, Raymond Palacios, Heinz Hofschneider, Joseph James Camacho, Edward Salas, Rosemond Santos, and Victor Hocog.

For the first time, the House will be composed of 20 members: 18 from Saipan, and one each from Rota and Tinian. ***(Agnes E. Donato)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Department of Public Health
Women, Infants and Children Program
Navy Hill Bldg N-25

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

On August 8, 2007 the Department of Public Health officially opened the Women, Infants and Children Program, better known as "WIC."

The WIC Program is 100% federally funded, and provides nutritious foods, nutrition education, and health care referrals for pregnant and new mothers, infants and children below the age of five (5).

The WIC Program's goals are to reduce nutrition related health problems, promote breastfeeding, prevent anemia, and help lower medical costs for low-income families in the CNMI.

WIC foods include iron-fortified infant formula and infant cereal, iron-fortified adult cereal, vitamin C-rich fruit or vegetable juice, eggs, milk, cheese, peanut butter, dried beans/peas, tuna fish and carrots. Special therapeutic infant formulas and medical foods may be provided when prescribed by a physician for a specified medical condition.

The Program would like to thank the community for it's patience during the initial phase of operation, and would like to assure the residents of Rota and Tinian that plans are underway to bring services to these respective islands. More information will be provided when the proposed opening dates are confirmed.

Eligible participants must meet income guidelines, CNMI residency requirements, and be determined to be "nutritionally at risk" by a health professional.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call 236-8750/58 or visit the WIC Clinic in the CHC Dialysis Center, north entrance.

AP

Republican presidential hopeful, former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, shakes hands with supporters at a victory party in Des Moines, Iowa, Thursday, Jan. 3, 2008, after being declared the winner of the Iowa Caucus.

AP

Democratic presidential hopeful,former North Carolina Sen. John Edwards, stands with his family after a post-caucus rally in Des Moines, Iowa, Thursday, Jan. 3, 2008.

OBAMA

From Page 1

senator from Illinois, told a raucous victory rally his triumph showed that in "big cities and small towns, you came together to say, 'We are one nation, we are one people and our time for change has come.'"

Final Democratic returns showed the first-term lawmaker gaining 38 percent support. Former Sen. John Edwards of North Carolina gained second, barely edging out Clinton, the former first lady.

Huckabee celebrated his own victory over Mitt Romney and a crowded Republican field. "A new day is needed in American politics, just like a new day is needed in American government," the former Arkansas governor told cheering supporters. "It starts here, but it doesn't end here. It goes all the way through the other states and ends at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue."

Huckabee, a preacher turned politician, handily defeated Romney despite being outspent by millions of dollars and deciding in the campaign's final days to scrap television commercials that would have assailed the former Massachusetts governor. He stressed his religion to the extent of airing a commercial that described himself as a "Christian leader" in his race against a man seeking to become the first Mormon president.

Nearly complete returns showed Huckabee with 34 percent support, compared with 25 percent for Romney. Former Sen. Fred Thompson and Sen. John McCain battled for third place, while Texas Rep. Ron Paul wound up fifth and former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani sixth.

With the New Hampshire primary only five days distant, Clinton and Edwards vowed to fight on in the race for the Democratic nomination.

"We have always planned to run a national campaign," the former first lady told supporters at a noisy rally attended by her husband and their daughter, Chelsea. "I am so ready for the rest of this campaign, and I am so ready to lead."

Edwards, the Democrats' 2004 vice presidential nominee, told The Associated Press in an interview he would distinguish himself from Obama in New Hampshire by arguing that he is the candidate who can deliver the change that voters have shown they want. "I"m going to fight for that change," he said by telephone from his hotel room in Iowa. "I've fought for it my entire life. I have a long history of fighting powerful interests and winning."

Not everyone was going on. Democratic Sens. Christopher Dodd of Connecticut and Sen. Joseph Biden of Delaware announced they would quit the race.

New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson said he would campaign in New Hampshire despite finishing in fourth place with a minuscule 2 percent support.

Romney sought to frame his defeat as something other than that, saying he had trailed Huckabee by more than 20 points a few weeks ago. "I've been pleased that I've been able to make up ground and I intend to keep making up ground, not just here but across the country," he said.

The words were brave, but already, his strategy of bankrolling a methodical campaign in hopes of winning the first two states was in tatters—and a rejuvenated McCain was tied with him in the polls in next-up New Hampshire.

Iowans rendered their judgments in meetings at 1,781 precincts from Adel to Zwingle, in schools, firehouses and community centers. Turnout was heavy, far more so for Democrats than Republicans in what could be an early indication of the country's mood after eight years of a Republican administration.

With President Bush constitutionally unable to seek re-election, a wide-open race developed in both parties that resulted in campaign organizations that dwarfed anything in previous campaigns. Romney alone spent $7 million on television commercials. The result was a record turnout.

Projections estimated that 220,588 Democrats showed up on a cold midwinter's night, shattering the previous mark of 124,000.

Turnout was also up on the Republican side, where projections showed about 114,000 people taking part. The last previous contested Republican caucuses in 2000 drew 87,666 participants.

In interviews as they entered the caucuses, more than half of all the Republicans said they were either born-again or evangelical Christians, and they liked Huckabee more than any of his rivals. Romney led handily among the balance of the Iowa Republican voters, according to the survey.

About half the Democratic caucusgoers said a candidate's ability to bring about needed change was the most important factor as they made up their minds, according to the entrance interviews by the AP and the television networks. Change was Obama's calling card in the arduous campaign for Iowa's backing.

AP

Sen. Joseph Biden, D-Del., speaks at a caucus night rally in Des Moines, Iowa, Thursday, Jan. 3, 2008. Biden abandoned his bid for the Democratic presidential nomination Thursday after a poor showing in the state's caucuses.

AP

Democratic presidential hopeful Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., talks with supporters following her caucus night rally, Thursday, Jan. 3, 2008, in Des Moines, Iowa.

SAIPAN

From Page 1

vious defeat in the Senate.

As a local bill, the proposal would have become law with just the support of the 21-member Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation.

But Aldan noted that this was illegal.

According to the Constitution, any form of gambling may only be established by Commonwealth law—either through passage by the entire Legislature or through the initiative process.

"If we can do it by a simple local law, Tinian shouldn't have had to go through the initiative process," Aldan said.

Saipan voters rejected a casino initiative last election. The House subsequently passed a limited gaming bill for Saipan, but the Senate killed it.

The bill now before the House is identical to the version rejected by the Senate.

The bill proposes to legalize Texas Hold'em poker games in conjunction with black jack and baccarat games. It would also allow the operation of video lottery machines.

Under the bill, these gaming activities may be held only at the La Fiesta shopping mall in San Roque. The term is for 15 years or until the current land lease terminates, whichever is later.

But a maximum of 40 slot machines may be licensed for operation in any hotel or resort on Saipan having 200 rooms or more.

The bill states that the proposed gaming activities are "very viable and can be a major source of new government revenue." Initial revenue estimates are pegged at $40 million a year.

"Whatever amounts that are realized will help replace the revenue lost from the closure of the garment industry and ensure the continued funding of critical government services," the bill states.

The bill proposes an annual license fee of $1.5 million on the first 30 poker tables for each approved location, plus $50,000 for each additional table. Each specific location can have up to 40 poker tables.

In addition, an annual license fee of $50,000 is proposed for each black jack and or baccarat table licensed for operation with the approved poker games.

The bill would impose a special gaming tax of 20 percent on the net gaming proceeds of any licensed activity.

The first $250,000 of the fees collected will go to a special account to be used for scholarships.

DISASTER

From Page 1

taken pursuant to such declaration must remain in place in order to ensure the safety of the people of the CNMI," Fitial said.

CUC data show that the power plants are generating only 48.6 megawatt due to mechanical problems. At Power Plant 1 alone, four major generators are down. This leaves the plant with only four working engines, with three in need of maintenance.

The power plants' output represents 43 percent of their total capacity.

The emergency declaration allows the governor to assume full control of CUC and suspend all regulatory statute provisions and regulations applicable to CUC, including procurement regulations. The governor will also have the power to reprogram all available funds to address CUC's problems.

In the initial emergency declaration, then acting Gov. Timothy P. Villagomez said the emergency declaration was due to CUC's inability to buy fuel for power generation.

The Fitial administration blames the Legislature for CUC's lack of funds. In October, the lawmakers enacted by veto override a law reducing power rates for residential customers. The administration warned that the rates would not cover the households' share of CUC's operating costs. This would result in a shortfall in electric revenues estimated at $7.2 million to $8.4 million a year.

In November, the administration adopted regulations to increase the rates in a bid to restore some of the rate cuts. Several lawmakers said the administration's move was illegal.

Current power rates remain at record-high levels.

Koblerville youth center seeks PC donations

The Koblerville Youth Learning Center is seeking computer donations from generous members of the community.

Ken Concepcion, youth program coordinator for the Koblerville Youth Center, said the center needs computers, whether new or used, for the use of the children who regularly visit the center.

"We were recently given a free Internet connection donation by PTI in September 2007 and the students were using only one computer for their research, ACCESS classes, remediation and tutoring, and for class projects. Because of this, it finally gave up and the hard drive for this computer crashed," Concepcion said.

He said they are looking for at least six to 10 computers.

The youth center serves about 200 kids throughout Koblerville, San Antonio, As Lito, Dandan, and San Vicente.

Concepcion pointed out that the Koblerville Youth Center lacks the technology resources present in other youth centers around the island and elsewhere around the nation.

"Since the opening of the Koblerville Youth Center in June 2007 we have been relying on our community partners in donating because of the zero budget at the Youth Center. We are seeking any used/new computers and CRT or LCD monitors as well as peripherals to use as student learning systems.

"We plan to implement a computer class for our students free of charge. Several. I.T. professionals have volunteered their time but could not continue due to the lack of computers at the center. The Koblerville Youth Learning Center has great kids who, if given the opportunity, will achieve great things. [A computer donation] will help them with their grades and keep them off the streets. Any assistance would be appreciated.

E-mail Ken Concepcion at lancheru@hotmail.com or kobler@pticom.com or call him at 288-0023. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

6 Saipan beaches red-flagged

The Division of Environmental Quality has red-flagged six beaches on Saipan and warns the public not to fish or swim within 300 feet of these locations for the next 48 hours.

The affected beach sites are the DPW Channel Bridge, S. Puerto Rico Dump, Garapan Fishing Dock, Garapan Beach Drainage, Sugar Dock, and Chalan Kanoa Dist #2 Drainage.

DEQ said that samples collected from these locations contained excessive concentrations of fecal indicator bacteria (enterococci) that exceeded the CNMI Marine Water Quality Standards. These bacteria can indicate the presence of human and animal waste in the water.

However, studies have shown that storm water runoff in tropical environments may also contain these bacteria from the natural environment, which may not be directly associated with public health concerns.

DEQ analyzes water samples collected from Saipan's recreational beaches and storm drainages every Wednesday. This week, samples were taken from 38 locations on Saipan's coast.

DEQ welcomes all inquiries as to the quality of the beach water. For more information, contact DEQ at 664-8500. ***(DEQ)***

Ex-Solomons AG bailed on child sex charges

BRISBANE, Australia (AP)— The Solomon Islands' former attorney general was granted bail on multiple child sex charges in Australia on Friday, a week after he was extradited from the Solomons.

Julian Moti, an Australian citizen, has been charged with seven counts of engaging in sexual intercourse with a person under 16.

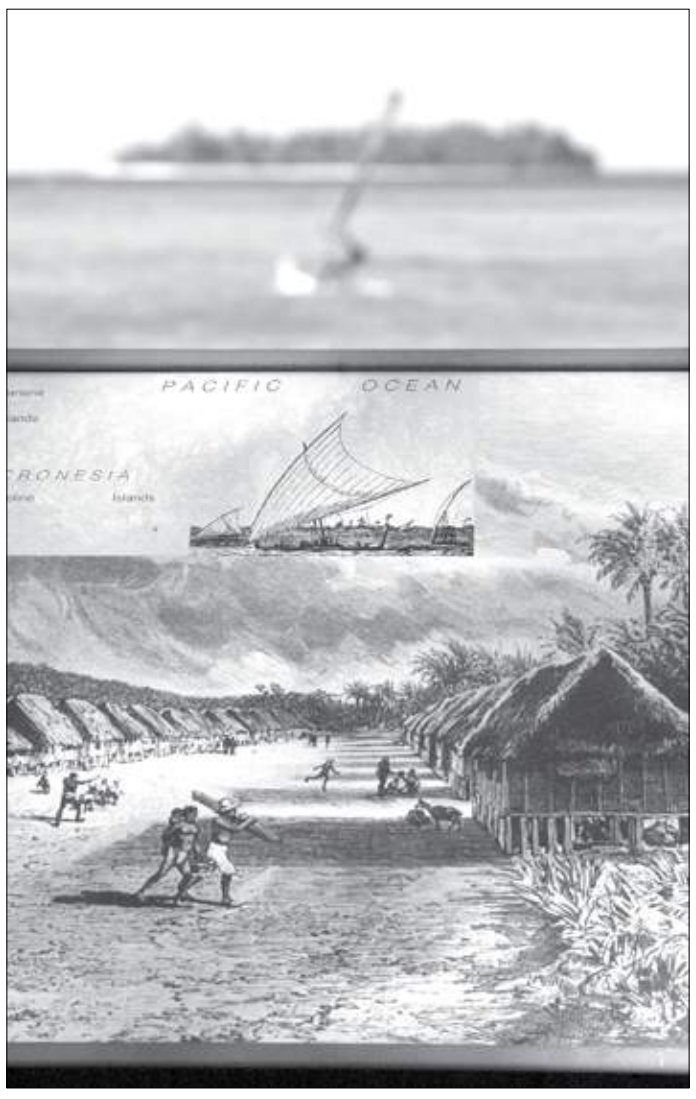
The charges relate to the alleged rape of a 13-year-old girl in the South Pacific nation of Vanuatu in 1997. Moti, 42, was acquitted of the charge in Vanuatu, but under Australian laws against child sex tourism, he can still be tried in Australia. If convicted, he faces a maximum penalty of 17 years imprisonment.

Moti appeared briefly in the Brisbane Magistrates Court in the eastern state of Queensland on Friday, where a judge agreed to release him on 100,000 Australian dollars (US$88,000; €59,650) bail to live with his parents in Sydney.

Last week, Moti was fired as the Solomon Islands' attorney general shortly after Manessah Sogavare, the prime minister who appointed him, was sacked in a no-confidence vote among lawmakers.

Sogavare was a close friend of Moti's and provoked Australia's ire by appointing Moti as his country's top legal official, despite the Australian charges.

Moti was deported to Australia late last month when the Solomons' High Court ruled that he held no special legal status as attorney general and was therefore not immune from extradition.



MICRO BEACH JACQUELINE HERNANDE

A former site of the first Carolinian village, Micro Beach is now home to kayakers, swimmers, sunbathers, and windsurfers alike.

IRS, Rev&Tax hold payroll seminar

The U.S. Internal Revenue Service and the CNMI Division of Revenue and Taxation invite all public employees and payroll officials to a payroll seminar to be held on Tuesday, Jan. 29, 2008, at 9am at the Multi-purpose Center in Susupe. The seminar is open to all public employers and payroll officials and will run approximately six hours.

The seminar will include a discussion on the following topics:

1. Employer/Independent Contractor issue
2. Form 941 Deposit and Filing requirements
3. Accountable plan rules on employee expense reimbursements
4. Fringe benefits including Vehicle usage rules and clothing
5. 1099 filing requirements
6. Reconcile Forms 941 and W-2
7. General Question and Answer Session

This seminar is a supplement to the annual seminar conducted by the Division of Revenue and Taxation in December, and covers other payroll related issues, outside of the filing of the annual reconciliation of wages and salary and the Form W2-CM.

Call the Division of Revenue and Taxation at 664-1000 to confirm your attendance. For additional information call Frances Ada at 664-1098 or email at frances.ada@dof.gov.mp.or Robert Westhoven of IRS at 207-784-6988 (robert.e.westhoven@irs.gov). ***(PR)***

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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EDITORIAL

The magic number

If we can read Wednesday's market news as a sign, 2008 could be a challenging year for the economy. In the new year's first hours of trading, the price of oil hit a record $100 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

Number-crunchers on Wall Street have anticipated this psychological milestone for some time. Oil prices have been rising since 2004, jumping almost 60 percent in 2007 to hit a then-record of $99.29 on Nov. 21. News of violence in Nigeria and supply hiccups in Mexico and the OPEC countries nudged prices into record territory again on Wednesday. Adjusting for inflation, oil is now about as expensive as it was in the dark days of 1980. "At $100 a barrel, we can start calling this an oil shock," one economist said.

Perhaps. But it doesn't necessarily portend a return to Carter-era doldrums. So far, the effects of high oil prices have been surprisingly modest. Yes, prices at the pump have gone up—for regular, from about $2.20 a gallon to about $3 last year alone, with $3.50 or $4 looking increasingly possible. Americans are beginning to change their fuel consumption habits, choosing to leave their gas-guzzling SUVs in the garage in favor of smaller cars (though perhaps not as quickly as the environmentalists among us would like).

But rising oil prices haven't upended the economy as a whole. Inflation remains relatively low, and many economists believe that the country can still avert a recession. They cite a number of reasons for this resilience. American companies are more efficient than they were 25 years ago, requiring less energy to produce goods and services. American families spend less on fuel too. In 1981, U.S. households spent more than 6 percent of disposable income on gasoline; today, they spend about 4 percent. The Federal Reserve has had an effect as well, by bolstering businesses' belief that inflation is in check. Companies, confident that the price of oil will eventually come down, pass fewer fuel-cost increases along to consumers. Consumers, in turn, continue spending, keeping the economy growing.

Of course, the steady rise in the price of oil hasn't been painless for everyone. For many lower- and middle-wage earners, it creates immediate hardship in the form of higher heating and transportation bills. For all of us, it portends a future of continued volatility and uncertainty. If oil prices remain around $100, experts say, the economy will eventually slow. We must reduce our dependence on this limited resource.

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Don't mistake a dynasty for democracy

By ROSA BROOKS
Special to the Los Angeles Times

Brooks is a professor at the Georgetown University Law Center. E-mail Brooks at rbrooks@latimescolumnists.com.

As the U.S. election season shifts creakily into higher gear, our leaders are enthusiastically lionizing slain Pakistani politician Benazir Bhutto. The former prime minister "returned to Pakistan to fight for democracy," noted Hillary Rodham Clinton. "The assassination of Benazir Bhutto is a tragic event ... for democracy," mourned Rudy Giuliani. Meanwhile, President Bush urged Pakistanis "to honor Benazir Bhutto's memory by continuing with the democratic process for which she so bravely gave her life."

Hold on! Bhutto was a courageous and compelling figure, but hardly a martyr to democracy. The daughter of a prime minister, Bhutto took over the leadership of the Pakistan People's Party from her mother, who herself inherited party leadership from Bhutto's father. Bhutto's own two terms as Pakistan's prime minister were marred by corruption scandals and allegations of involvement in still darker activities, including the 1996 murder of her own brother, a party rival.

Her policies didn't always further democracy either. Bhutto actively supported the Taliban's military takeover of Afghanistan, for instance. She was willing to help empower the most extremist and repressive Islamic organization the world has so far seen in exchange for the imagined strategic advantage an entrenched Taliban government in Afghanistan would give Pakistan in its unending power struggle with India.

After disgrace and exile, Bhutto returned to Pakistan in fall 2007 on a self-styled mission to rescue Pakistan from chaos, and she loudly demanded the restoration of democracy. Pakistan could use some genuine democracy—but Bhutto, an eternally polarizing figure, was hardly the woman to usher in a new era of democratic stability, regardless of the Bush administration's hopes.

Bhutto's tragic death itself underlines the limits of her commitment to democracy. In her will, she named her 19-year-old son, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, as her successor as chair of the Pakistan People's Party, appointing her husband, Asif Ali Zardari, as co-chair and quasi-regent until Bilawal comes of age. To Bhutto, political power was something one could inherit, something to be passed along from spouse to spouse and from parent to child, like grandmother's pearls or grandfather's favorite chair—or like the infamous Swiss bank accounts that led to corruption charges against her in several countries.

And who knows? Maybe Bilawal's not such a bad choice for the Pakistan People's Party. A history student at Oxford, he already has a constituency—at least on Facebook, where someone has established a new fan group called "Let's not assassinate Bilawal Bhutto because he's hot, OK?" Bilawal's own Facebook profile is fairly modest: "I am not a politician or a great thinker. I'm merely a student. I do the things that students do like make mistakes, eat junk food ... but most importantly of all ... learn." Still, "My time to lead will come."

What's weirdest about all this is that not very many people in the United States seem to have noticed that this is all pretty weird. A champion of democracy passes along political leadership in her will, leaving it to her husband and son? That's dynastic politics, not democratic politics.

Kings and queens pass along their political positions to their children; paragons of democracy do not. But you won't find even a hint of this in the reactions of the leading presidential contenders from either party, or from the White House, or from most leading U.S. media commentators.

There is, of course, an obvious and depressing explanation for why so few people in the United States seem to have registered this as jarring: We're perilously close to becoming a dynastic state ourselves. Our current president, George W. Bush, is the son of a former president, George H.W. Bush. Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, who is struggling to hold on to her position as Democratic Party front-runner, is married to former President Bill Clinton.

You can't blame the heirs of political dynasties for their fortunes. Nineteen-year-old Bilawal is a pawn in a deadly game; so far, he hasn't had much control over his life. Benazir Bhutto didn't have much either: In September, she wrote, rather poignantly, "I didn't choose this life. It chose me." Similarly, George W. Bush didn't choose his father, and it's not Hillary Clinton's fault that the young law professor she married later became president.

All the same, there's something awfully creepy about the dynastic trend in American politics. If Hillary Clinton is elected president in 2008, by 2012 the U.S. presidency will have been controlled for 24 years by two families. More families have divvied up the political spoils in Pakistan in the last 24 years.

The United States isn't Pakistan, thank goodness. But as voters in Iowa's caucuses kick off the 2008 presidential season, we'd do well to think about what makes the U.S. and Pakistan different—and about what values we Americans need to nurture if we're going to remain a true democracy and not sink into our own brand of corrupt dynastic politics.

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Voters want real answers on immigration

By TAMAR JACOBY
Special to the Los Angeles Times

Jacoby is a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute.

The Iowa caucuses won't begin for hours, and the outcome, in both parties, is up for grabs. But many pundits already know what they're going to say afterward, at least about immigration and its effect on the results.

It's the conventional wisdom on immigration—you've heard it a dozen times. That the public is virulently anti-immigrant. That political leaders—including President Bush and the senators from both parties who voted last summer to overhaul the immigration system—are hopelessly out of touch with this angry tide. That millions of people across the country are going to vote on the basis of their fury.

And that the only immigration reform Americans will accept, this year and perhaps for years to come, is "reform" along the lines advocated by Rep. Tom Tancredo of Colorado and CNN's Lou Dobbs: harsh, anti-immigrant policies designed to drive millions of foreigners out of the United States.

The only problem: It isn't so. The situation isn't nearly so black and white.

True, immigration has loomed large in Iowa, once a state with virtually no immigrants, now full of foreigners seeking work in new meatpacking plants. It's also true that growing economic insecurity—the emerging X-factor of the 2008 campaign, already edging out Iraq as the No. 1 issue—could end up compounding concern about immigration nationwide. And there's no question that presidential candidates, Democrats included, have spent months inflaming voter anger in Iowa and elsewhere.

But that doesn't mean, as some pundits suggest, that the public will end up voting on immigration, on Thursday or in the months to come—and it would be a mistake to conclude from the ugly campaign that Americans are opposed to immigration reform.

Public opinion surveys on immigration are remarkably consistent, changing little even in the last year. An unvarying 20 percent to 25 percent of voters are bitterly anti-immigrant: determined to close the borders, send illegal workers home, cut back even legal immigration quotas. Although they are a minority, these xenophobes are loud and intense; they call in to talk radio, show up at town hall meetings, write to their members of Congress and dominate the debate. On the other hand, 15 percent to 20 percent of voters generally are sympathetic to immigrants but are neither vocal nor intense. The majority of voters—the 60 percent in the middle—are ambivalent and uncertain, undeniably anxious about the influx but also prepared to come to terms pragmatically with the 12 million illegal immigrants in the country.

Whatever else they feel, most voters want politicians to solve the problem. They want the borders secured. They want immigrants to enter the country legally. They want to restore order in their neighborhoods and workplaces. And last spring, when Congress was debating a compromise that addressed these concerns, two-thirds to three-quarters of the public supported it.

What has changed in the last six months is the nature of the debate. Today, neither Democrats nor Republicans are offering solutions. What they're doing, each in language more incendiary and provocative than the last, is denouncing benefits for illegal immigrants: drivers' licenses, affordable college tuition, the ability to use public services such as schools and hospitals. And although there are persuasive arguments—public-safety arguments, among others—for allowing even illegal immigrants to have access to some services, the ambivalent 60 percent don't like the idea. The same voter who six months ago told pollsters he was in favor of the solution being debated in the Senate is ticked today by this talk of what he sees as giveaways. As a result, the debate has grown much more shrill.

What we don't know is whether voters will reward candidates for the new nativist tone. In the past, they haven't. In 2006, also an ugly campaign, no congressional race turned on the basis of immigration, and in fact, to the degree the issue played a role, polls showed that harsh anti-immigrant rhetoric turned voters off.

Of course, this year could be different: Voters' anxieties are plainly running higher. But for all the angry talk, polls show the public still hungry for a solution and, if anything, put off by the way the candidates are demagoguing immigrants. According to a Washington Post/ABC poll that tracked changes over the last eight months, voters are losing confidence in both Democrats' and Republicans' ability to handle the issue. Barely one-quarter of voters think the one step Congress has taken—mandating a border fence—is enough to take care of the problem.

And even in the midst of today's vitriolic debate, a majority still favor a compromise package that combines tougher enforcement with a practical answer for the illegal immigrants already in the country. A late November Los Angeles Times/Bloomberg poll, among others, revealed how little opinion has changed: 63 percent of Democrats, 64 percent of Republicans and 57 percent of independents favor allowing illegal immigrants who meet certain conditions—registering, being fingerprinted, paying a fine and learning English—to earn citizenship over time.

Does anyone running for office hear these voters? It doesn't seem so. And if today's debate continues, Americans will have no chance, in the primaries or in November, to express their desire for a practical solution—one that deals realistically with the illegal immigrants already here.

Certainly no candidate is offering anything along those lines. That would take leadership and a willingness to look beyond conventional wisdom.

Letter to the Editor

A proposal that reeks

What part of NO does the Legislature not understand? Your own voters resoundingly defeated the casino initiative. Every time a gaming bill or initiative has gone before the public, it has been shot down. I would love to feel that the Legislature has the interests of the CNMI before their own personal agenda. However, the apparent backdoor politics makes any semblance of the Legislature's sense of fairness, democracy, and attentiveness to the voters wishes a complete sham.

The Legislature is working VERY hard to get gaming on Saipan. Too bad they can't put such efforts into positive and constructive projects that will benefit the entire CNMI. In light of the Senate's recent defeat of a similar proposal, it would appear that Saipan's politicians are in total disregard AND disrespect of the sister islands of Tinian and Rota. Such behavior will drive away even the most stalwart investors. This, of course, translates into hundreds of millions of dollars of investment monies on Tinian, as well as the loss of potential tax dollars for the CNMI treasury.

The proponents of this bill will tell us that revenues to Saipan are estimated at $40 million. Gee...that sounds great. But I have to wonder: If this is such a great opportunity for Saipan, why was there no public forum? Who came up with $40 million? What is the money trail from baccarat table to public coffers? Who will oversee that everything is kept honest? Who are the backers of this scheme? And what might the taxpayers' liability be? Could there be a hidden agenda and/or conflict of interests by those proposing and backing this bill?

The questions are there but certainly not the answers. And if the Legislature is not up front and transparent regarding the important details of this bill, then it would seem that they are hiding something from the public. There are already too many instances of backdoor politics, hidden agendas, and personal financial enrichment at the expense of the people of Saipan. Let's not open the door to more of the same. If the Legislature feels that this is a legitimate, honest, and fair proposal, then they should not object to presenting all the facts via public forums, debates, and more lively discussion. Let the voters have input. Isn't that what a democracy is all about? As it stands now, this proposal reeks of...well, it just reeks.

Bill Weiss
Puerto Rico, Saipan

Finding your happy place

By ERIC WEINER
Special to the Los Angeles Times

Weiner is the author of The Geography of Bliss: One Grump's Search for the Happiest Places in the World.

A new year is upon us, and the self-help industrial complex is in full swing, pestering us to slim down, bulk up, become a new you, a better you, a happier you. Yes, it's all about you. The 1970s may have been the Me Decade, but the naught years are shaping up to be the You Decade.

There is, it turns out, little difference between You and Me. Both outlooks reflect a firmly held and particularly American belief that happiness lies deep inside the inner you, or me, or whatever.

The self-help industry has it wrong. Social scientists studying happiness (or subjective well-being, to use the academic term) have found that external factors—quality of government, social interactions and, to an extent, money—determine our happiness more than anything else. In other words, happiness does not reside inside of you. Happiness is out there.

Which particular out there makes a huge difference in your happiness level. National levels of contentment vary widely, from the morose Moldavians to the chronically cheerful Danes. Happiness, it turns out, is like oil. Some countries are awash in it; others are bone dry.

In fact, psychologists at the University of Leicester in Britain recently produced the world's first map of happiness. Using data from the emerging science of happiness, they created a color-coded atlas of bliss, a topography of the human spirit, from Algeria to Zimbabwe. It's not climate or topography or some mysterious "energy" that is at work here, but national culture. Some cultures are simply better at producing happy citizens than others.

Not surprisingly, democracies tend to fare better than dictatorships, though it's not clear which way the river of causality flows. Perhaps happy countries tend to embrace democracy and not the other way around. Trust of others is another prerequisite for a happy nation, and that is a troubling fact for fans of American happiness. In 1960, 58 percent of Americans felt most people could be trusted. By the 1990s, only 35 percent held that view. Indeed, given our economic and military muscle, the U.S. occupies a modest spot on the atlas of bliss. We are not as happy as we are wealthy.

The map contains more than a few surprises. Latin American countries, for instance, are among the happiest in the world, despite their relative poverty and often shaky political situations. "The Latino bonus," some researchers have dubbed this phenomenon. One explanation: the close family ties found in Latin American countries and among many Hispanics in the U.S.

Jean-Paul Sartre famously declared that "Hell is other people." Sartre got it wrong, or perhaps he was hanging out with the wrong people. The emerging science of happiness has found that the single biggest determinant of our happiness is the quantity and the quality of our relationships.

The way people relate to one another varies tremendously from one nation to another and, to a lesser extent, from one city to another. These differences persist despite the advent of cell phones, the Internet and other technologies that have supposedly conquered distance.

We can be anywhere, the apostles of a place-less future tell us, a message that dovetails nicely with the self-help movement's we-can-be-happy-anywhere mantra. Rumors of geography's demise, though, have been greatly exaggerated. Yes, technology has, in some cases, compressed distance, but not nearly as much as we've been led to believe. The vast majority of phone calls and e-mails never cross an international border. Even the Internet is largely a local technology, with most people checking local weather and sports and not the price of a grande latte in China.

Place matters even to those who forecast its demise. The purveyors of the place-less world, it turns out, tend to congregate in one place: a 50-mile corridor between San Francisco and San Jose, where they happily bike and hike and generally behave as though geography does matter.

Which it does. Its role in our happiness and our psyche is a fact that the forces of globalization and technology have failed to erode. That's why each year about 40 million Americans pick up stakes. Sure, we move for career opportunities or for family (a desire for either greater proximity or distance). But for many Americans, moving is about happiness: the U-haul version of Horace's legendary search for the Happy Isles.

The forces of technology aren't slaking our thirst for our own Happy Isles but stoking it. The number of people traveling—for work and pleasure—is on the rise, as packed airplane flights make painfully clear.

So, at the dawn of another new year, I say: Stop looking for the new you and, instead, book a flight. Or better yet, call a friend.

Sattelite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲84° ▼75°	▲84° ▼75°	▲84° ▼74°	▲84° ▼75°	▲84° ▼75°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲86	▼77
Palau	Cloudy	▲88	▼78
Yap	Cloudy	▲86	▼78
Chuuk	Cloudy	▲88	▼78
Pohnpei	Mostly Cloudy	▲86	▼76
Kosrae	Partly Sunny	▲88	▼77
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼77

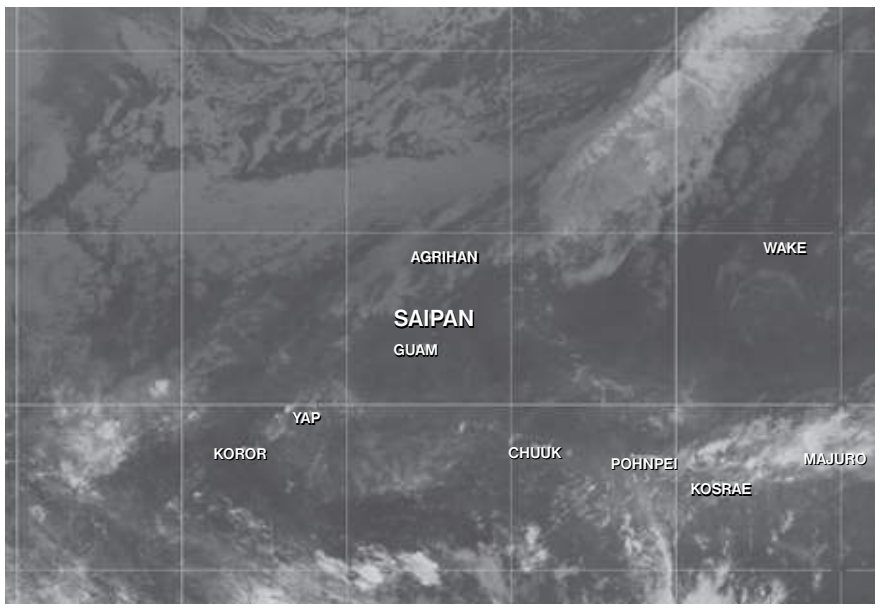
Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Sunny	▲74	▼61
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	▲42	▼27
Hong Kong	Mostly Sunny	▲69	▼59
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲80	▼68
London	Rain	▲47	▼43
Los Angeles	Partly Sunny	▲61	▼48
Manila	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼74
Melbourne	Sunny	▲94	▼77
Miami	Cloudy	▲74	▼65
New York	Partly Sunny	▲47	▼35
Osaka	Partly Sunny	▲52	▼38
Paris	Rain	▲48	▼44
Pusan	Sunny	▲53	▼30
Rome	Mostly Cloudy	▲55	▼44
Salem	Rain	▲42	▼34
San Francisco	Rain	▲53	▼45
Seoul	Sunny	▲41	▼21
Tokyo	Partly Sunny	▲51	▼36
Washington, DC	Partly Sunny	▲47	▼37

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
7:12AM Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet
11:46AM Today	Low Tide:	1.4 Feet
4:30PM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00AM, FRIDAY, JAN. 4, 2008
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from east of Minami Tori Shima at 25N157E to 20N150E, then continues as a shear line through Anatahan at 16N146E to 9N130E and beyond. Widespread cloudiness and patchy rain are found along and up to 250 miles northwest of this boundary. A near-equatorial trough stretches east-southeastward from 3N130E through a weak circulation centered near 2N135E to near EQ155E. Scattered showers are occurring well south of Palau and Chuuk between the equator and 3N from 137E to 153E. Aided by an upper-level trough nearby, trade-wind convergence is triggering scattered showers from east of Chuuk across Pohnpei, Kosrae and Majuro to west of the dateline. This large area is within 150 miles of a line from 7N154E to 5N160E to 6N168E to 11N178E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:44AM	6:00PM
Sunday	6:45AM	6:00PM
Monday	6:45AM	6:01PM
Tuesday	6:45AM	6:02PM
Wednesday	6:45AM	6:02PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	3:46AM	3:07PM
Sunday	4:40AM	3:57PM
Monday	5:33AM	4:51PM
Tuesday	6:25AM	5:46PM
Wednesday	7:15AM	6:42PM

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  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 25, 2007

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Guam

CO9317	5:00am	5:50am	1,2,4,5,6,7
CO9597	8:30am	9:20am	1,2,5,6
CO9313	8:30am	10:00am	3,4,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	2,3,4,5,6,7

Saipan-Seoul

OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2,4,6,7

Saipan-Busan

OZ 608	4:00am	7:35am	1,4,5,7

Guam-Manila

CO 891	6:00am	10:30am	3 via Yap and Koror
CO 893	6:30am	8:05am	6
CO 893	8:25am	10:00am	2
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:45am	1,2,4,6,7

Saipan-Manila

CO 895	4:45pm	6:35pm	6
CO 895	6:45pm	8:35pm	3

Saipan-Nagoya

NW 078	8:30am	11:10am	Daily

Guam-Nagoya

CO 971	7:45am	10:30am	1,2,4,5,6,7
NW 023	4:15pm	7:05pm	Daily
CO 904	4:35pm	7:25pm	Daily

Saipan-Narita

NW 078	8:30am	1:30pm	Daily via Nagoya
NW 075	4:55pm	7:30pm	Daily

Guam-Narita

JO 982	4:15am	7:00am	Daily
CO 961	7:20am	9:55am	Daily
CO 006	1:00pm	3:45pm	Daily
JO 942	3:30pm	6:15pm	Daily
NW 081	3:55pm	6:50pm	Daily
NW 073	4:15pm	7:00pm	Daily
CO 963	4:50pm	7:30pm	Daily

Saipan-Osaka

NW 083	4:30pm	7:15pm	1,2,3,5,6,7

Guam-Hongkong

CO 910	7:45pm	10:40pm	1,5

Saipan-Guanzhou

CZ 3008	5:00am	8:00am	2,6

Saipan-Rota

CO 9313	8:30am	9:05am	3,4,7

Rota-Guam

CO 9313	9:30am	10:00am	3,4,7

ARRIVALS

Guam-Saipan

CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	1,4,5,6,7
CO 9316	3:30am	4:20am	2
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9598	10:15am	11:45am	1,2,6 via Rota
CO9600	10:45am	11:35am	3,4,5,7
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	2,3,4,5,6,7

Seoul-Saipan

OZ 605	9:00am	2:30pm	2,4,6,7
OZ 603	7:40pm	10:00am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6
OZ 607	6:50pm	2:50am+1	3,7 via Busan
OZ 607	7:30pm	2:50am+1	4 via Busan

Busan-Saipan

OZ 607	9:30pm	2:50am+1	3,4,6,7

Manila-Guam

CO 894	11:20am	4:55pm	2
CO 894	7:45pm	1:20am+1	6
CO 892	9:45pm	5:25am+1	3 via Koror
CO 892	9:45pm	6:30am+1	3 via Koror and Yap
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	5 via Koror
CO 934	11:10pm	4:40am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:15pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7

Manila-Saipan

CO 890	9:15am	2:55pm	6
CO 890	11:45am	5:35pm	3

Nagoya-Saipan

NW 077	8:45pm	1:10am+1	Daily

Nagoya-Guam

NW 024	10:00am	2:40pm	Daily
CO 970	11:30am	4:00pm	Daily
CO 905	8:25pm	12:50am+1	1,3,4,5,6,7

Narita-Saipan

NW 076	10:35am	3:05pm	Daily
NW 077	6:15pm	1:10am+1	Daily via Nagoya

Narita-Guam

JO 941	9:30am	2:05pm	Daily
NW 074	9:45am	2:25pm	Daily
CO 962	11:05am	3:35pm	Daily
CO 007	5:15pm	9:50pm	Daily
NW 082	8:30pm	1:15am+1	Daily
CO 964	8:40pm	1:15am+1	Daily
JO 981	9:30pm	2:05am+1	Daily

Osaka-Saipan

NW 084	10:40am	3:20pm	1,2,3,5,6,7

Hongkong-Guam

CO 910	11:40pm	6:20am+1	1,5

Guanzhou-Saipan

CZ 3007	8:00pm	4:00am+1	1,5

Rota-Saipan

CO 9598	11:10am	11:45am	1,2,6

Guam-Rota

CO 9598	10:15am	10:45am	1,2,6

(Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana. ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Schedule of Religious Services

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral
Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm

Korean Center
Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish
Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am
Monday- Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm
Saturday: 6am and 6pm

Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish
Wednesday Mass: 6pm
First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm
Saturday Mass: 6pm
Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am

Saint Jude Parish
Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm

San Antonio Parish
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Tuesday and Friday: 6pm

San Francisco de Borja-Rota
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6pm

San Isidro-Rota
Sunday: 5am and 10am
Monday-Wednesday: 7pm
Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish
Sunday: 6am and 7:30am
Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm

San Roque Parish
Sunday: 9am
Wednesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10:30am

San Vicente Parish
Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6pm

Santa Remedios
Sunday: 7:30am
Tuesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10am-Baptism

Santa Soledad
Sunday: 7:30am

PROTESTANT

Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan
Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm
Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10-11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan
Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm
Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan
Worship/Study Opportunities
Adult Sunday School: 9am
Youth Sunday School: 9am
English Worship Service Sunday: 10am
Sunday Service: 5:30pm
Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm
Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm
Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm;
Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm
Mid-week Service: 7:30pm
Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm
Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30 pm
Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau,
Call 235-0545 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan
Worship Service: 9am
GBI Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am
Sunday: 7am
Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm
Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan
Thursday: 5:30am (Tagalog); 7:45 pm (English)
Saturday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church Koblerville
Sunday Services
8:00 AM Choir Rehearsal
9:00 AM Family Worship
3:00 PM Choir Rehearsal
Wednesdays at Parsonage
7:00 PM Prayer, Share and Care

Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation)
Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal
8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:15am-Sunday School
Wednesday: 8:00pm-Prayer Meeting
Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church)
Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)

Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan
English Service: 9-11am, Sunday
Tagalog Service: 6-8pm, Sunday

Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 8:20am
Sunday Adult: 10am
Sunday Adult: 11:30am
Sunday Evening: 7:30pm
Wednesday: 8pm

Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 10am–12noon
Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm
Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm
Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm
Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm
Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)

Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan
English Worship Service: 9-10:30am
Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm
Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am
Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm
English Sunday School: 11am-12pm
Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting:
English, 7pm-8pm
Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm

Missions Connection Ministry
Every Sunday Celebrations:
10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog)
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
Youth Impact Friday: 7pm
Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm

Northern Marianas Christian Church
Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided)
Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisu FS#1 for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620

Saipan Bible Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30-10am
Divine Worship: 10am-11:30am
Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm

Saipan Christian Church
Sunday: 7:30am-10am
Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm
Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting)
Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)

Saipan Church of Christ
Sunday Bible Class: 9am
Sunday Worship: 10am
Sunday Worship English: 6pm
Sunday Worship Tagalog: 7pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30pm

Saipan Community Church
(Sunday Services)
Palau Service: 7:30am-9am
English Service: 10am-11:30am
Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm
Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan
(Saturday Church Services)
Sabbath School Program: 9-10am
Lesson Study: 10-10:40am
Divine Service: 11-12pm
Visitation: 3-4pm
Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm
Sundown Worship: 6-7pm

First Baptist Church (Formerly Saipan Baptist Church)
Afetna St., San Antonio
Sunday
9am Sunday school
10am Regular worship
6pm worship
Wednesday
7pm worship
Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church. For further information, please call Pastor David M. Mclure at 234-1939/235-7779.

Thy Word Ministries Saipan Faith Center
Phone 234-0209
New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches.
Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi
Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi
Service Times
Sunday 10:00am Worship Service
Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes
Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies
Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer
Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice
Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service
Saturday 10:00am Evangelism

Upper Room International Ministries
Sunday 5:30am-6:30am
Morning prayer
7am-9am English service
7am-9am Sunday school
10am-12noon
English service, Koblerville
Wednesday 7pm-9pm Prayer meeting
Saturday 7pm-9pm Tagalog service
Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday AM Worship:10:30am
Sunday PM Worship:7:00am
Wed Worship: 7:30pm
Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times
Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

JANUARY 5, 1999

Tourism still wobbly
Continental Micronesia has projected a three percent decline in Japanese traffic in Micronesia and Hawaii as the Japanese economy remains in the dump. Japan, the world's second largest economy, plunged in deepest recession since World War II after the collapse of the speculative "bubble" economy in the late 1980s. Wally Dias, staff vice president for sales and promotions, said the airline has no plan to add flights or new routes in Micronesia and Asia as consumer confidence remains weak.

Year's first offender
Superior Court Judge Edward Manibusan has set a $5,000 cash bail for 22-year-old Darrell Muna Quitugua, first offender for 1999. Quitugua appeared in court yesterday where a three-count information was filed by Assistant Attorney General Ramona V. Manglona. He was arrested on New Year's Day. Quitugua was charged with attempted robbery, attempted theft and assault and battery. Court documents showed that on Dec. 30, 1998, Quitugua attempted to take the property of Koresco Co. by use of force and violence. He also assaulted another individual, identified as Zhe Wu Hong.

JANUARY 5, 2001

Workers ordered to support claims
U.S. District Judge Alex R. Munson has ordered garment factory workers suing their employers on Saipan to back allegations they were forced to pay recruitment fees in order to work on the island. He granted partly the two motions filed by garment manufacturers seeking to dismiss and strike the claims from the $1 billion class-action lawsuit. In his ruling issued the other day, the federal judge gave "one last opportunity" for the plaintiffs—who are unnamed guest workers employed by the local garment industry—to file an amended complaint within 20 days.

DLNR extends Pohnpei food ban
Lands and Natural Resources Secretary Joaquin A. Tenorio has extended for the seventh month since June last year the emergency order of quarantine banning the entry of food products from Pohnpei in light of a cholera epidemic in the Micronesian island. In an official order released yesterday, Dr. Tenorio warned that the risk posed by food originating from Pohnpei is potentially greater than the risk presented by food items imported from other FSM states. "There is currently a vibrio cholera epidemic in Pohnpei and it is important that the health of the people of the Commonwealth be protected," the DLNR chief stated.

JANUARY 5, 2003

Govt: Action-filled 2003
Gov. Juan N. Babauta gathered members of his Cabinet early this week to set goals for 2003-a time that the chief executive anticipates to be "probably the most defining year of his administration," his public information officer said Friday. Peter Callaghan, the administration's spokesperson, said that Cabinet members were encouraged to think of ways to reduce costs and increase revenues. "He wants cooperation and support from all his Cabinet members to address the serious issues faced by the Commonwealth. He described 2002 as probably the worst year we've ever had economically.

Budget requests due on Jan. 31
The Office of Management and Budget has handed down the budget call, asking government agencies to work on their appropriations requests for fiscal year 2004, with the deadline set for January 31, 2003. Public agencies are not bound by any specified budget ceiling but OMB underscored that revenue projections for FY2004 are anticipated to be close, if not lower than, the current levels. The deadline for submission of the budget request will be strictly enforced, according to OMB, noting that request for extensions will not be entertained under any circumstances.

JANUARY 5, 2004

City Trust robbery mastermind falls
The alleged mastermind in the first bank robbery in the CNMI fell into the hands of Vietnam authorities during the holidays, after federal authorities tracked him down to the communist state. Vann Le, a Saipan businessman, went into hiding after U.S. and CNMI enforcers tagged him as the mastermind behind the April 2002 City Trust Bank robbery.

Business

Toyota overtakes Ford as US second biggest

DETROIT (AP)—Toyota Motor Corp. overtook Ford Motor Co. to become the No. 2 automaker by U.S. sales in 2007, using new products and relentless strategy to break Ford's 75-year lock on the position.

Toyota sold 2.62 million cars and trucks in 2007, which amounted to 48,226 more than Ford, according to sales figures released Thursday. Toyota's sales were up 3 percent for the year, buoyed by new products like the Toyota Tundra pickup, which saw sales jump 57 percent. Ford's sales fell 12 percent to 2.572 million vehicles.

General Motors Corp. remained the U.S. sales leader, selling 3.82 million vehicles in 2007. But that was down 6 percent from the previous year as customers turned away from some large sedans and sport utility vehicles and GM cut low-profit sales to employees and rental car agencies. GM's car sales fell 8 percent for the year while truck sales were down 4 percent.

Overall, the year was expected to be the worst for the auto industry since 1998 as consumers fretted over high gas prices, falling home prices and the economy.

December also was a tough month for automakers despite a slew of holiday discounts. Toyota's sales slipped 2 percent for the month, while GM's sales were down 4 percent and Ford's fell 9 percent.

Nissan Motor Co.'s December sales were down 2.4 percent, while Honda Motor Co.'s December sales were flat, with a 10 percent increase in car sales canceled out by a 10 percent decline in truck sales.

"This was definitely a challenging year to be in the car business, and 2008 isn't likely to be a piece of cake," Dick Colliver, executive vice president of American Honda, said in a statement.

Oil prices steady above $99

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices rose slightly Friday from the previous session's close after setting a record above $100 a barrel overnight on a larger-than-expected drop in U.S. crude stockpiles.

The U.S. Energy Department's Energy Information Administration said Thursday that crude inventories fell 4 million barrels last week, more than the 1.7 million barrel decline analysts surveyed by Dow Jones Newswires, on average, had expected.

The large decline wasn't able to keep oil prices above $100 "likely because the inventory drawdown was at least in part attributed to year-end inventory management by American oil companies," said Victor Shum, an energy analyst with Purvin & Gertz in Singapore.

Light, sweet crude for February delivery added 9 cents to $99.27 a barrel in Asian electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange by midday in Singapore.

The contract had risen 47 cents overnight to $100.09 a barrel, a trading record, before retreating to settle at $99.18 a barrel, down 44 cents.

Crude's move to $100 a barrel prompted Indonesian officials to announce plans to ask OPEC to boost output to bring down oil prices, Dow Jones reported. While that may be tempting to some Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries members, many analysts think high prices will themselves do the trick by cutting demand.

US economic stimulus package eyed

WASHINGTON (AP)—Amid new worries about a possible recession, the housing slump and rising oil prices, President Bush is exploring an economic stimulus package to reinforce the U.S. economy.

White House press secretary Dana Perino said Thursday that Bush is closely monitoring economic trends and is seeking input from his economic advisers on the pros and cons of such a package.

"The president has indicated that he will not make up his mind as to whether or not to lay out a package until the State of the Union," Perino said about the president's speech on Jan. 28. "Our economic policy is like our military policy. It is based on conditions on the ground and the president listens to advice from his economic advisers."

On Friday, Bush will receive an update from a working group on financial markets, an interagency panel that meets regularly to discuss market conditions and regulatory policy. Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson is chairman of the group. The other members are: Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke; Chris Cox, chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission; and Walt Lukken, acting director of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

The Commerce Department reported Thursday that orders for manufactured goods rose by 1.5 percent in November, the biggest rise since a 3.4 percent surge in July. But the increase reflected higher petroleum prices and was not seen as a sign of renewed strength in the nation's manufacturing sector.

Nation

Clinton unbowed by third-place finish

AP

Democratic presidential hopeful, Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., speaks at her caucus night rally with her husband, former President Bill Clinton and daughter Chelsea Clinton at her side Thursday, Jan. 3, 2008, in Des Moines, Iowa.

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP)—Democrat Hillary Rodham Clinton, claiming to be unbowed by a third-place finish in the Iowa Democratic caucuses, hailed a "great night for Democrats" and said the strong turnout pointed to the sure election of a Democratic president in November. She said she would "keep pushing as hard as we can."

But her poor showing here was a searing blow to the former first lady, dissolving her image as her party's inevitable nominee and setting up a critical five-day race to Tuesday's leadoff primary in New Hampshire.

Clinton told cheering supporters that she had congratulated caucus winner Sen. Barack Obama and the second-place finisher, former Sen. John Edwards. She promised to take "this enthusiasm and go tonight to New Hampshire."

"We're going to keep pushing as hard as we can," she said, with former President Bill Clinton and their daughter Chelsea at her side. "I am so ready for the rest of this campaign and I am so ready to lead."

Iowa Democrats delivered a cautionary tale to the New York senator, an established figure on the public stage who is running to be the first woman president.

Caucus goers appeared to reject the central premise of Clinton's candidacy, favoring Obama's message of hope and change over her theme of experience and leadership.

More troubling still was her performance among key groups that had been expected to form the core of her support.

Entrance polls in the state showed Obama narrowly beating Clinton among women voters, whom her campaign had expected to turn out in large numbers to support her pioneering quest. She also failed to win a majority of voters who called health care their chief concern, despite her long association with the issue.

ACROSS THE NATION

Flurries in Fla., but no crop damage

TAMPA, Fla. (AP)—Flurries fell across the Sunshine State on Thursday, but it appeared that growers were spared the deep freeze they feared would devastate the nation's citrus supply. Meanwhile, California was preparing for a trio of storms expected to unleash heavy rain and snow through the weekend. Temperatures were not below freezing for long enough to cause widespread damage to Florida's citrus trees, the group said. In fact, the cold could benefit some growers because it slows down growth and hardens up citrus trees. Growers had tried to harvest as many mature fruits and vegetables as possible, and tried to protect plants by spraying them with water that freezes, insulating the temperature at 32.

Fake grouper turns up around Florida

TAMPA, Fla. (AP)—At many restaurants around Florida, the specialty of the house is a slab of grouper, blackened, grilled, stuffed or encrusted with pecans, sometimes on a roll, maybe with a slice of Bermuda onion. But not at Richard Gonzmart's place. Gonzmart, whose family has owned the Columbia restaurant in Tampa's Cuban-American Ybor City section for four generations, won't serve grouper, because he can't be sure he is getting the real thing from his suppliers. The Florida Department of Business & Professional Regulation, which regulates restaurants, found 139 cases of something other than grouper being sold as the fish between January 2006 through the end of last October - more than half of all food misrepresentation cases statewide during that time. The runners-up were 75 cases of fake crab and 34 cases of fake tuna.

Soldier accused of abusing stepson

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—A soldier has been accused of severely beating his 3-year-old stepson on Christmas after the boy's grandparents placed a hidden camera in the child's bedroom and picked up sounds of suspected beatings. Army Spc. Alfred Gene Bullock, 21, was on leave from the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Ky., when he visited his wife's parents near Jamestown, Tenn., about 100 miles east of Nashville. He is charged with aggravated child abuse and was in custody on $50,000 bond. Bullock attended a preliminary hearing Wednesday, and the case is expected to go before a grand jury next week.

Biden to abandon his presidential bid

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP)—Delaware Sen. Joe Biden abandoned his bid for the Democratic presidential nomination Thursday after a poor showing in the state's caucuses.

"There is nothing sad about tonight. We are so incredibly proud of you all," Biden told his supporters. "So many of you have sacrificed for me and I am so indebted to you. I feel no regret. I ain't goin' away.

"I want to thank the people of Delaware and I'll be going back to the Senate as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee," he said.

The veteran lawmaker received less than 1 percent of the vote despite a spirited campaign in which he emphasized his international policy credentials and long career in public service.

His advisers had hoped for a fourth-place finish and thought even third place was possible.

Biden, 65, went to the Senate in 1973 after winning a race few expected him to. He was only 29, but turned 30—the minimum age for service in the Senate—shortly thereafter.

Giuliani praises Huckabee's win in Iowa

HIALEAH, Fla. (AP)—Republican presidential hopeful Rudy Giuliani praised rival Mike Huckabee for his win in the Iowa caucuses on Thursday—a contest Giuliani skipped—yet insisted his own early-state campaign could win over the long haul.

"I think we're in good shape. We're ahead in maybe 16, 18 of the 29 states that are coming up," the former New York mayor said. "This was the first one. I think it's one that, quite honestly, we didn't expect that we would win. And we didn't put a lot of resources into it. And now we'll move on to the others."

Giuliani holds an early lead in polls in Florida, which conducts its primary Jan. 29, and he hopes a strong showing here will offset poor results in early-voting states.

He said he thinks his early-state strategy will pay off "in that we've paid a lot of attention to states that some other candidates haven't paid much attention to."

"I congratulate Mike. I think he's got a really good victory there" in Iowa, Giuliani added.

Texas man freed after 26 years in prison

DALLAS (AP)—Three times during his nearly 27 years in prison, Charles Chatman went before a parole board and refused to admit he was a rapist. His steadfastness was vindicated Thursday, when a judge released him because of new DNA evidence showing he indeed wasn't. The release of Chatman, 47, added to Dallas County's nationally unmatched number of wrongfully convicted inmates.

"Every time I'd go to parole, they'd want a description of the crime or my version of the crime," Chatman said. "I don't have a version of the crime. I never committed the crime. I never will admit to doing this crime that I know I didn't do."

District Judge John Creuzot, whom defense lawyers credited with shepherding Chatman's case for exoneration through the legal system, recommended that Texas' Court of Criminal Appeals find Chatman not guilty. With several relatives dabbing at their eyes with tissues and cheering, Chatman was released.

"I really can't tell you how I feel," said his aunt, Ethel Bradley. "But I can tell you it is a different feeling than I have had in a long time, just to be holding his own hand."

Before the crime is officially cleared from Chatman's record, the appeals court must accept the recommendation or the governor must grant a pardon. Either step is considered a formality after Creuzot's ruling.

Chatman became the 15th inmate from Dallas County since 2001 to be freed by DNA testing. He served more time than any of the other inmates, four of whom were in court Thursday to show their support.

Dallas has freed more inmates after DNA testing than any other county nationwide, said Natalie Roetzel of the Innocence Project of Texas. Texas leads the country in prisoners freed by DNA testing, releasing at least 30 wrongfully convicted inmates since 2001, according to the Innocence Project.

AP

Dallas Distict Court Judge John Creuzot, left, gives Charles Chatman a hug after leaving court Thursday, Jan. 3, 2008, in Dallas.

Asia

'Bhutto death not our fault'

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—President Pervez Musharraf vehemently denied Thursday that Pakistan's military and intelligence agencies were behind Benazir Bhutto's killing, and implied she was partly at fault.

Musharraf

Despite threats by militants, Bhutto poked her head out of the sunroof of her vehicle to greet supporters at an election rally, Musharraf said.

He conceded there were shortcomings in Pakistan's investigation into the assassination but rejected accusations of a lapse in security for the former prime minister.

"The same military and intelligence agencies are using the same people who are attacking them? It's a joke," Musharraf said at a news conference, answering accusations that people connected to his government were involved in the suicide bomb and gun attack that killed Bhutto a week ago.

The president acknowledged that his decision to seek help from Scotland Yard to investigate the killing was partly to reassure people at home and abroad that there was no government involvement. Bhutto had accused elements in the ruling party of plotting to kill her.

"Here's a situation where maybe we need to go beyond ourselves to prove to the world and our people here, who are emotionally charged, that we don't mind going to any extent, as nobody is involved from the government side or the agencies," Musharraf said.

Sri Lanka pulls out of cease-fire deal

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)—Sri Lanka's government officially notified peace-broker Norway on Thursday that it is pulling out of a 2002 cease-fire agreement with Tamil Tiger rebels that has failed to quell the violence.

Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama handed a letter to Norwegian Ambassador Tore Hattrem, saying the government has decided to terminate the Norway-brokered agreement, a Foreign Ministry statement said.

Japan PM apologizes for pension scandal

TOKYO (AP)—Japan's prime minister apologized Friday for a growing scandal over millions of lost pension records and promised to deliver policies focusing on consumers and everyday people.

Fukuda

The government has previously acknowledged losing track of more than 50 million pension records in a scandal that damaged the ruling party, playing a role in its loss of control of parliament's upper house in nationwide elections in July.

"The political responsibility is heavy," Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda said at a New Year's news conference. "I offer my apologies."

ASIAN BRIEFS

SKorean spy chief visited NKorea

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea's spy chief made an unannounced visit to North Korea on the eve of his country's presidential election last month, an official said Friday. Kim Man-bok, head of the National Intelligence Service, made the one-day trip to Pyongyang on Dec. 18 to install a commemorative stone in front of a pine tree that President Roh Moo-hyun planted during a summit trip to the North in October, an NIS spokesman said. Local media speculated that the spy chief might have also discussed inviting the North's No. 2 leader, Kim Yong Nam, to visit Seoul before Roh's term ends late next month. But the NIS spokesman, who spoke on condition of anonymity citing office policy, dismissed the speculation as groundless.

Myanmar marks 60 years of independence

YANGON, Myanmar (AP)—Myanmar's military rulers celebrated the 60th anniversary of independence from Britain on Friday with a simple flag-hoisting ceremony and a message from the junta chief calling for more discipline in the country. The annual message from junta leader Senior Gen. Than Shwe did not directly mention the pro-democracy street rallies that were violently suppressed by troops in September, but he reiterated that the military-ruled government will make democratic reforms according to its own so-called road map. Than Shwe called for the country's cooperation in building a "discipline-flourishing democratic state."

7 killed in Afghanistan suicide attack

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (AP)—A suicide bomber attacked Indian road construction workers and their Afghan police escorts Thursday in southwestern Afghanistan, killing seven and wounding 12. The convoy had been traveling on a main road toward the city of Khash Rod in Nimroz province when it was hit by a remote-controlled bomb that was planted on a motorcycle, wounding one policeman, said Nimroz Gov. Ghulam Dastagir Azad. The convoy stopped after the first explosion, and a suicide bomber set off a second attack, killing six policemen and an Indian worker, Azad said. Ten policemen and two Indian workers were wounded.

Market blaze kills Chinese firefighters

BEIJING (AP)—Fire engulfed a 12-story wholesale market in northwest China, killing at least two firefighters before officials ordered fire companies out of the building for fear it might collapse, state media said. A third firefighter was missing after trying to search the building for occupants, Xinhua News Agency said. It said the fire started about 8 p.m. Wednesday and spread throughout the structure. Xinhua said the fire reached an adjacent 20-story hotel but was brought under control. The hotel's occupants had been evacuated as a precaution.

China lists 'taboos' ahead of reshuffle

BEIJING (AP)—China's ruling Communist Party has warned officials against bribery, spreading hearsay and several other taboos, ahead of the reassignment this month of several provincial-level politicians to new posts, a government news agency said. The no-nos were on a list of "10 taboos" released by the party's central committee and discipline commission, Xinhua News Agency said late Thursday. The taboos included lobbying officials of higher rank, handing out pamphlets or souvenirs without authorization, holding social activities to form cliques, and offering or taking bribes. Also on the list were making phone calls, giving gifts, holding banquets or conducting visits to win support; covering up illicit activities; spreading hearsay against others; using intimidation or deception; and arranging jobs for others.

World

Kenya streets wracked by violence

AP

A young girl cries as she is carried by a man fleeing an area of wooden kiosks which was set on fire by supporters of Raila Odinga's party, the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), in the Kibera slum area of Nairobi, Kenya Thursday, Jan. 3, 2008.

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)—Police used tear gas, water cannons and batons Thursday to block thousands of people from protesting Kenya's disputed election amid a political deadlock between the president and his chief rival. Kenya's attorney general said there should be an independent probe of the election results because of the perception the Dec. 27 vote was rigged. The U.S. and Europe pushed for reconciliation, saying a "made-in-Kenya solution" was needed to end violence that has killed about 300 people since President Mwai Kibaki was declared the winner.

As the diplomats discussed unity, Kenya's slums burned.

"War is happening here," said 45-year-old Edwin Mukathia, who was among thousands of people who poured out of Nairobi's slums to heed opposition candidate Raila Odinga's call for a million-man march in the city's Uhuru Park.

But Mukathia and the others were kept at bay by riot police, who choked off the roads and fired live bullets over their heads. The opposition canceled the march but said they would hold it Friday, setting the stage for another day of upheaval stretching from the capital to the coast to the western highlands.

The conflict has brought condemnation from diplomats across the globe as one of Africa's top tourist draws and most stable democracies descends into chaos.

Libya takes charge of UN council

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—A Libyan took over as president of the U.N. Security Council Thursday, capping the nation's climb back to respectability. But its ambassador said Libya's past ordeal under U.N. sanctions puts it "in a very difficult position when we speak about imposing sanctions against another country."

The rapid ascent of Libyan Ambassador Giadalla Ettalhi to this month's revolving council presidency, occurring during the first month that Libya has ever been allowed onto the council, is a remarkable turnabout for the north African nation long seen as a sponsor of terrorism.

Ettalhi said that Libya's past as an international outcast would make it reluctant to impose U.N. sanctions on another country.

WORLD BRIEFS

Khamenei says Iran ties with US possible

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—Iran's supreme leader said Thursday that he was willing to restore diplomatic relations with the United States but doing so now would make his country more vulnerable to U.S. espionage. "I would be the first one to support these relations," state radio quoted Ayatollah Ali Khamenei as saying at a student group meeting in the central Iranian province of Yazd. "Of course we never said the severed relations were forever," added Khamenei, 69, who has final say in all state matters. "But for the time being, it (restoring ties) is harmful and we should not pursue it." Khamenei said restoring ties with the U.S. now would "provide an opportunity for security agents to come and go, as well as for espionage."

Rival Shiites in Iraq try to make peace

BAGHDAD (AP)—Representatives of radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr met Thursday with officials from his chief rival's party in an effort to cement a tenuous peace agreement the two signed in October after violent clashes between their followers. It was at least the second formal overture al-Sadr has made to Abdul-Aziz al-Hakim and his Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council, the largest Shiite political party, in less than a week. The U.S. military, meanwhile, announced the deaths of three of its soldiers. Two were killed and a third wounded in a small arms attack Thursday in Diyala province northeast of Baghdad. A soldier was killed the previous day in south Baghdad when his dismounted patrol hit a roadside bomb, the military said.

Aid group worker killed in Somalia

BERLIN (AP)—A guard working for an aid group in Somalia was killed in a raid on its offices, two German partner organizations said Thursday. Meanwhile, two foreign aid workers who had been kidnapped by gunmen in Somalia then released unharmed after a week's captivity arrived in Madrid. Mohamoud Ahmed Sheikh, a guard for the Daryeel Bulsho Guud organization, was killed Wednesday when 40 heavily armed men stormed its compound in Mogadishu and plundered its offices, Caritas international and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe said. The German groups did not say who might have been behind the attack.

Israeli offensive kills 9 in Gaza

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP)—The Israeli army stepped up a broad offensive in the Gaza Strip on Thursday, killing at least nine Palestinians with airstrikes and shelling attacks after militants fired a rocket that struck deep into Israel.

Palestinians accused Israel of poisoning the atmosphere ahead of President Bush's visit to the region next week.

In strikes all over Gaza, Israeli aircraft and tanks hit buildings the Israelis said were used by militants. In one clash, Israel shelled a house in the southern city of Khan Younis, killing a militant along with his mother, sister and brother. Israeli army spokeswoman Capt. Noa Meir said militants were "intentionally using civilian areas" to fire at troops and blamed them for the deaths.

After the shelling, the three-story house leaned to one side, barely standing, as an Israeli bulldozer leveled land nearby.

In another strike, a 14-year-old boy was critically wounded. His limp body, a mangled foot dangling, was rushed into a hospital emergency room.

Nabil Abu Rdeneh, a spokesman for President Mahmoud Abbas, condemned the army offensive, which followed the firing of a Katyusha rocket into Israel.

Maharlika – PinoyNews

Total OFW ban in four countries

DoLE cites Iraq, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Nigeria

By LIRA DALANGIN-FERNANDEZ
INQUIRER.NET

MANILA—The government has imposed a complete ban in the deployment of Filipino workers to Iraq, Lebanon, Afghanistan, and Nigeria, Labor Secretary Arturo Brion announced.

Filipino workers are prohibited from working in these countries because of the political and peace and order conditions in these countries, Brion told reporters in Malacañang Thursday.

The ban on Iraq has been in effect since 2004, while in Lebanon, since June 2007. In December 2007, the government also ordered a complete ban on Nigeria and Afghanistan, Brion said.

"This means we are no longer processing the application of workers for these countries," he said but added that Filipinos who have been working in those countries would not be forcibly evacuated.

The government will also tighten the noose on illegal recruiters who facilitate the workers' departure from the Philippines to the four countries, Brion said.

He acknowledged however that despite the ban, illegal deployment in these countries continued.

Brion said Pakistan was not included because it was not a destination country for Filipino workers, noting that there are only close to 300 Filipinos there.

In Lebanon, there are close to 20,000 documented workers and several thousands more who are undocumented, he said. He added they have no record as to how many Filipinos were in Iraq because the country has no embassy there.

In Afghanistan there are about 1,000 workers while in Nigeria, there are about 4,500 Filipino workers, according to the May 2007 data of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Peso hits 8-year high vs dollar

By ENRICO DELA CRUZ
THOMSON FINANCIAL

MANILA—The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, the country's central bank, is believed to have intervened in the currency market in early trade Friday when the peso hit its best level in nearly eight years against the US dollar.

The greenback remained under pressure as investors awaited the key US employment report amid growing fears the world's largest economy could fast slip into a recession.

"Some participants said the central bank might be there. The dollar is trading near a critical support level of 41-flat so they might have been there to provide support," said a Manila-based currency trader.

The peso traded to as high as 41.01 per dollar, its strongest level since March 2000. It closed at 41.08 on Thursday.

The dollar dropped to 109.21 yen in Tokyo morning trade from 109.30 in New York late Thursday.

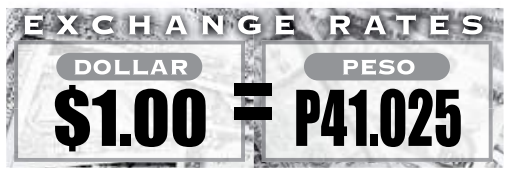
Market players were bracing themselves for the release later in the day of US jobs data for the month of December to look for clues on whether the US economy is headed for a recession.

A weaker-than-expected jobs number will likely further weaken investor sentiment and increase pressure on the Federal Reserve to lower interest rates again. Lower rates will reduce support for the greenback.

The peso was the best performing Asian currency in 2007, with a gain of 18.8 percent, boosted by brisk fund inflows into the region and record earnings remittances by overseas-based Filipinos.

AP

DOWN MARKET
A trader leaves the trading floor at the end of the trading day as the electronic board shows a downward trend Thursday, Jan. 3, 2008 at the Philippine Stocks Exchange in Manila's financial district of Makati. Philippine shares, weighed down by fear of a U.S. recession, recorded their sharpest single-day fall since a significant drop in October.



Continental to fly stranded Filipino fishermen

HAGÅTÑA, Guam—Continental Micronesia flew home the last of the stranded Filipino fishermen from Palau to their home country of the Philippines last night. The airline provided a combination of free and discounted tickets for the fishermen, and began flying them home on staggered dates this week.

"We're proud to help in humanitarian efforts such as this," said Continental Micronesia Director for Asia and Micronesia Sales and Marketing David Kendell.

"They survived an ordeal drifting in the open sea, but experienced a holiday miracle by being rescued and then cared for by the hospitable people of Palau," said Kendell. "As we begin a new year, we're just as happy to help reunite the fishermen with their loved ones and to bring them home."

The fishermen were fishing in Indonesia when their vessel, KM Maranatha, had engine trouble and lost radio contact on Dec. 4, 2007. They drifted for seven days, eventually entering Palauan waters. On Dec. 11, 2007, their vessel ran aground at Helen's Reef and sustained irreparable hull damage. Palau's marine enforcement officials rescued the crew and brought them to Koror on Dec. 17, 2007. They have been recovering in the small island nation of Palau since.

Continental Micronesia provides scheduled air service from Palau to Manila on a Boeing 737 next—generation jet. This year marks the airline's 40th anniversary of providing essential air service to Micronesia.

Continental Micronesia is headquartered in Guam and operates a Pacific hub from the A.B. Won Pat International Airport.

? LABOR FRONT

Refugee Protection appeal

By FERDIE P. DE LA TORRE
REPORTER

Q: Can an applicant for Nonrefoulement Protection or Refugee Protection appeal the Office for Refugee Protection's decision?

A: Yes. Either the applicant or the CNMI government may appeal the Office for Refugee Protection's decision to grant, deny or terminated the protection to the Attorney General or his or her designee. According to the CNMI Immigration Regulations, the appeal must be filed within 15 business days of service upon the applicant.

If no appeal is made to the AG in that period, the ORP's decision will become final and unreviewable administratively or judicially. The applicant will be entitled to remain in the Commonwealth pending the outcome of the appeal but may be required to remain in detention.

■ ■ ■

Q: How should an applicant write his or her appeal?

A: The appeal and all attachments must be in English, Carolinian or Chamorro, or accompanied by a certified English translation. The appealing party should file a written notice with the Office of the Attorney General. The notice should state the relief requested and may include a concise statement of the grounds for the appeal.

Upon review, the Attorney General may, at his or her discretion, take any of the following actions:

■ Restrict review to the existing record

■ Permit or request legal briefs or supplement the record with new evidence

■ Hear the matter.

■ ■ ■

Q: How soon can the Attorney General issue his or her decision with respect to an appeal?

A: According to the Regulations, upon completion of review, the AG shall affirm, reverse, or modify the findings, order, or decision of the Administrative Protection Judge in writing within 10 business days, or as soon thereafter as reasonably practical.

The AG may remand under appropriate instructions all or part of the matter to the APJ for further proceedings such as the taking of new evidence and the making of new or modified findings due to additional evidence.

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OFWs in distress slam RP envoys for negligence and incompetence

By VERONICA UY
INQUIRER.NET

MANILA—A group of overseas Filipino workers has criticized some members of the Philippine diplomatic corps for "bad attitude, negligence, and incompetence" in dealing with OFWs in distress.

In a letter to Senate President Manuel Villar, Ellene Sana, executive director of the Center for Migrant Advocacy, cited five such instances—Teresita Santos, who was gang-raped in Saudi in August 2005 by five men; Julian Camat, Hermilo Ramos, and Napoleon Fabregas, who spent more jail time than their sentence provided; and Esnaira Angin, an irregular OFW from Maguidanao who was denied help at the embassy in Dubai.

Villar demanded that these embassy and consular officials be identified and punished. In Senate Resolution 248, he urged the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations to look into these allegations.

"The seeming insensitiveness and indifference of a number of our diplomatic and consular officials and personnel have been reported and they are destroying the image and dignity of a larger, more committed, devoted and excellent public servants in foreign service," he said in a statement.

Rise in RP prices seen as oil hits $100

AP

A man sits in front of a price board of a gasoline station Thursday, Jan. 3, 2008, in Manila, Philippines.

SINGAPORE—Oil prices on Wednesday soared to a record $100 a barrel in New York on escalating violence in Africa's leading oil producer, a weaker US dollar and expectations that global demand for oil will outstrip supplies.

While the surge in US oil prices rattled consumers and businesses across Asia, the head of a private oil price watchdog in the Philippines said prices of fuel and other basic goods would only rise "moderately" this month.

"All kinds of products would be affected, especially agricultural goods," said Raul Concepcion, chair of the Consumer and Oil Price Watch.

While acknowledging that the oil situation should be closely monitored, Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila said prices of basic commodities should remain at their present levels as there was an ample supply of these goods.

Still, Concepcion said rising prices would be inevitable this month.

"Whatever the government is saying about ample supplies, we cannot deny that prices would increase this month," said Concepcion, who regularly attends meetings of the National Price Coordinating Council.

Don't panic

Officials of oil companies in the Philippines, however, voiced doubts high world crude prices could be maintained for an extended period. "Don't panic yet. It's a one-day spike ... I don't think it's something we'll see sustained in the coming days or weeks," said Fernando Martinez, chair of Eastern Petroleum Corp.

Light, sweet crude for February delivery fell 31 cents to $99.31 a barrel in Asian electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange by Thursday afternoon in Singapore.

Traders were awaiting the release of a weekly US petroleum supply snapshot later Thursday, and some expected crude futures to break through the $100 a barrel level if the US government reported crude inventories fell by more than expected, analysts said.

"We're so close to $100 right now," said Victor Shum, an energy analyst with Purvin & Gertz in Singapore. "If the US inventory report indeed shows stock draws, and particularly bigger than expected draws, plus a heightening of geopolitical risks and a falling US dollar, all these factors could push pricing beyond $100."

China, India's rising demand

Oil and gasoline demand in the surging economies of China and India have sent prices soaring over the past year, and tensions in oil-producing nations like Nigeria and Iran have increasingly made investors nervous and encourage speculators to drive prices higher.

Estrada says he'll return to movies

By JIM GOMEZ
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Ousted Philippine President Joseph Estrada said Thursday he has decided to return to the movies, his original springboard to fame and power, and might consider trying for a political comeback following his historic corruption conviction.

Estrada said he has begun talks with a local film company for a possible comedy movie that could be shown later this year.

He said he was still undecided, however, about whether to try running in the next presidential election in 2010, when his political nemesis Gloria Macapagal Arroyo ends her term and by law cannot run again.

Estrada

The country's constitution bars former presidents from seeking the post again, but Estrada's aides have argued that he may still be eligible because his six-year term was abruptly cut in 2001—when rivals, including Arroyo, led the nonviolent "people power" movement that toppled him amid massive public demonstrations.

Shortly after being forced from power, Estrada was detained on charges of plundering the country's coffers by pocketing kickbacks and illegal gambling payoffs.

He was convicted in September after a six-year trial and sentenced to life in prison, but Arroyo pardoned him a month later and he was set free. Arroyo's camp says her pardon came with an implied condition that Estrada would not seek public office again.

Back to Muntinlupa for Jalosjos

It's back to Muntinlupa for convicted child rapist Romeo Jalosjos after the Zamboanga City Regional Trial Court junked his habeas corpus petition Thursday, prompting Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez to order the inmate's return to the New Bilibid Prison.

Gonzalez said his order for Jalosjos' return to the NBP would take effect once he receives the copy of the RTC decision.

He said the transfer would be implemented even if Jalosjos filed a motion for reconsideration.

After the transfer, it would depend on the Bureau of Corrections director, Oscar Calderon, to decide if he wants to transfer Jalosjos, a former congressman of Zamboanga del Norte, to a new detention center.

"I want him to be brought to the Bilibid," Gonzalez said.

RTC Judge Jesus Carbon said the Department of Justice's computation of Jalosjos' release date should prevail over that of the BuCor director, and thus ruled that the convict was being lawfully detained at the San Ramon Penal Farm despite his claim that he had a Dec. 16 order authorizing his release.

Jalosjos walked out of the NBP on Dec. 22 and flew to Dapitan, where he was arrested and subsequently detained at the San Ramon Penal Farm, about 30 km from Zamboanga City. Carbon earlier barred prison officials from transferring Jalosjos to the NBP while his habeas corpus petition was pending.

In his decision, Carbon said the Dec. 16, 2007, release date of Jalosjos as computed by the BuCor, under its former director Vicente Vinarao, was not final because the justice secretary had the power to annul or revise the computation.

The DOJ issued a Jan. 1, 2008, resolution placing Jalosjos' release date at June 24, 2010, following the President's commutation of his sentence. It disapproved two years and six months' worth of good conduct time allowance granted to him by Vinarao.

10-hour fire destroys Baclaran mall

By JULIE M. AURELIO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

All elements for a major disaster were there.

The mall was packed with combustible materials. The water supply was low. Kibitzers were everywhere. The nearest fire hydrant was more than a kilometer away. Strong winds were roaring in from the bay.

And the flames—which raged for more than 10 hours before they were placed under control—came so close to licking a portion of the Light Rail Transit station along Taft Avenue in Baclaran.

As luck would have it, no one was reported killed or injured in the blaze that reduced the three-story Galleria Baclaran Shopping Mall to a blackened skeleton of concrete.

It was the 16th fire to break out in the country since New Year's Eve—and the fourth big fire in Metro Manila since New Year's Day.

It took more than 100 firetrucks and 20 sorties from a Philippine Air Force helicopter carrying pails of water from Manila Bay to control the fire.

AP

Firemen work to extinguish a burning building Thursday, Jan. 3, 2008, in one of Manila's bargain areas of Baclaran.

Senior Supt. Ruben Bearis, director of the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) in Metro Manila, said he expected total damage—initially estimated at over P30 million—to climb higher once stall owners began to file their affidavits of loss with authorities.

"It will be only then that we will be able to confirm the actual loss," he said.

Fire sale

Bearis said he was still waiting for the final report of arson investigators before he could ascertain what caused the fire.

At least two owners of stalls in the gutted mall, who refused to give their names, claimed some of the initial BFP responding teams wanted a "price" for putting out the fire.

Maharlika – PinoyStyle

Jennylyn, Patrick are expecting

By BAYANI SAN DIEGO JR.
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA—It's confirmed. Singer-actress Jennylyn Mercado and boyfriend Patrick Garcia are infanticipating.

The news was confirmed by both GMA Artist Center, Mercado's management company, and Arnold Vegafria, Garcia's manager.

Vegafria said that Mercado is six weeks pregnant. He asserted that Garcia "will not turn his back on his responsibilities to both Jennylyn and their child. Vegafria denied, however, that the young couple were supposed to get married on Thursday.

"They're too young," he said, adding that Garcia will continue with his work on the forthcoming GMA-7 drama, "Babangon Ako't Dudurugin Kita," which topbills Yasmien Kurdi and JC de Vera.

Mercado and Garcia's team-up in the planned soap, "Maging Akin Ka Lamang," however, was shelved, Vegafria added. "The network has decided to shelve the Jennylyn-Patrick love team for the time being," he said.

Ida Henares, head of GMA Artist Center, expressed support for Mercado. She said via SMS: "We are standing by her. But with her health in mind, we have decided to give her a break from work."

"When she's ready and in the right condition to work, we are willing to support her and give her another show," Henares added.

According to Henares, GMA-7 was told that the couple had expressed plans to get married but not right away.

Henares' office also related that Mercado will be replaced by Nadine Samonte, another GMA-7 talent and alumna of the "Starstruck" reality-based talent search, in "Maging Akin Ka Lamang."

According to their respective managers, Mercado is 20 years old, while Garcia is 26. Mercado was the grand winner of the first season of "Starstruck," GMA-7's reality based talent search along with former boyfriend and screen partner Mark Herras.

Mercado currently appears on the primetime soap "La Vendetta," which is about to conclude its run.

Christopher crosses over

MANILA—For his nth film fest, Christopher de Leon has agreed to play a supporting role to upcoming actors Alfred Vargas and Paolo Contis in "Banal."

Instead of getting dissuaded after reading the script of the Metro Manila Film Festival entry, he became all the more interested.

"I saw the names of the other actors who were being considered for the part [listed on the script]," De Leon told Inquirer Entertainment during the MMFF Parade of Stars on Dec. 24.

Dream role

"Other actors were also vying for it, so I told my manager [Lolit Solis] that I wanted it. It was a dream role, something I could sink my teeth into."

He didnít mind, either, that it was an indie production by a first-time filmmaker. "If you look at the film, it's very mainstream."

In the action-drama directed by GMA 7 news reporter Cesar Apolinario, De Leon plays Major Miguel Sagala, an alcoholic and sadistic SWAT (Special Weapons and Tactics) trainer.

Real cops

Like co-stars Vargas and Contis, De Leon underwent a day-long training with real cops at the Southern Police District Headquarters Firing Range in Taguig.

They received a special certificate naming them as honorary Makati SWAT members, recalled Apolinario.

De Leon said he patterned his character after the military meanies portrayed by Lou Gossett Jr. in "An Officer and a Gentleman" and R. Lee Ermey in "Full Metal Jacket."

"In a lot of army or cop movies, thereís always this ëiconicí character of a bad-tempered trainer," De Leon explained.

But he said he endeavored to make Major Sagala, the mentor/tormentor of Vargas and Contis, a bit distinctive. "I didnít want my character to become a stereotype. My goal was to show that this strong-willed character also has a soft side. I was precisely attracted to the role because it has a lot of heart."

Debuting director Apolinario was impressed by De Leon's professionalism. "He was able to show that even a man who's supposed to be loud and tough can also be a loving family man."

Apolinario admitted that he was a fan, having watched over 50 of the award-winning actor's films, including "Tatlong Taong Walang Diyos," "Kakabakaba Ka Ba," "Relasyon," "Broken Marriage"--and the MMFF 1976 Best Picture winner, National Artist Eddie Romero's "Ganito Kami Noon, Paano Kayo Ngayon."

De Leon also won Best Actor for "Ganito" that year.

"But in 'Banal' I saw a different Boyet (De Leon's nickname)," Apolinario said. ***(Philippine Daily Inquirer)***

Brazilian model behind Cesar, Sunshine breakup

By DOLLY ANNE CARVAJAL
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA—When I heard the news that Cesar Montano and Sunshine Cruz had "separated" for the nth time, I knew it was one of their petty quarrels again.

Being a close friend of the couple, I've seen them in their unguarded moments. They are both intense and passionate. Their every emotion—whether it be anger, jealousy or joy—is magnified.

Shine is super selosa by nature. Buboy has a checkered past but now he has mellowed.

The pinpointed "culprit" of their current spat is 16-year-old Brazilian model Marianna del Rio. She is the ex-GF of Victor Basa. Marianna has appeared in many commercials (Lactacyd, LBC, Samba, Lucky Me, Nova etc ...) and is taking acting workshops in ABS-CBN.

According to her good friend Carla de Mesa, Buboy and Marianna met in his hometown in Bohol. He asked her to be his leading lady in an indie film that he would be producing.

"Natuwa si Buboy kay Marian, kasi ang galing niya mag-Tagalog. We went to Buboy and Shine's resthouse in Bulacan to attend a workshop. Their relationship is purely professional," stressed Carla. "Kaya nagulat ako when Sunshine called to interrogate me. I understand where she's coming from but sana naman 'wag siyang maniwala agad sa sabi-sabi. A friend (TV host) called her up daw and made sumbong that she saw Buboy and Marian kissing in Rockwell. That's not true at all! Kung may relasyon sila, dapat maging discreet di ba? But there's nothing going on between them."

Marian flew back to Brazil to spend the holidays with her current BF.

Nervous

"She's wary of what Mr M. (Johnny Manahan) will say more than what Shine thinks," says Carla. "She's kinda nervous because she's not used to intrigues." Buboy introduced Marian and Carla to Shine when they bumped into one another at Rockwell. "If they were having an affair, eh di dapat di na pinakilala ni Buboy si Marian kay Shine."

At press time, Shine sent me this text: " I don't want to say anything at the moment. I'm still hoping that this will be fixed for the sake of our family." And Buboy's text goes: "This is one of Shine's childish reactions. Someone just texted her and poisoned her mind. She overreacted and made wild speculations. I did not have an affair or one night stand with a Brazilian lady. I'm not stupid. Matagal kong pinagpaguran ang pangalan ko especially now that I'm endorsing several products. I'm not going to ruin it just like that. I love my wife and my kids. Di ko sila ipagpapalit para lang sa sandaling kaligayahan. I have all the reasons to keep my name clean and stay away from ugly things. Perhaps my detractors overwhelmed my wife this time. My message to them is: May katapusan din kayo!"

Best friend's view

I asked Buboy's best bud Bayani Agbayani on his sentiments about the issue. "Mahirap makialam sa away magasawa," he explains. "Sila lang talaga ang nakakaalam kung ano ang nangyayari sa loob ng kwarto nila. Walang pwedeng umayos ng mga problema nila kundi sila din mismo. Basta ang payo ko parati kay Buboy, 'Masarap umuwi 'pag alam mong may asawa at anak kang naghihintay sa 'yo."

It really is a cruel world out there especially when you're in show biz. But couples like Buboy and Shine can take comfort in the thought that they have each other to come home to. After eight years of marriage, they have endured the unendurable. A love like theirs is a terrible thing to waste.

PERSONAL FINANCE

Starting the new year right

Question: I'd like to start my New Year right in all aspects – health, relationships, finances. What suggestions can you give me on how to handle my finances better? – Roala Yu

Answer: The New Year is always a good start to make things right. In the area of finances, there are many things you can do this year to not only improve the state of your finances, but also to pave the way for your financial security in the future. Here are some money resolutions you can adopt:

Begin with your end goal in mind.

In short, determine your financial goals. What would you like to achieve 5, 10, 15 years from now? When do you plan to retire? When you know your goals and the time frame you have until then, it will be easier to make the roadmap to achieve your financial goals. A good goal, for instance, would be to start a saving plan. Commit to set aside a portion of your income monthly and when the pot is big enough, invest it in higher-yielding investments. If you're married with children, another good goal would be to save enough money to cover their college tuition in ten years' time.

Assess how you manage your money monthly.

This January, write down all your income sources and amounts received, then list down all your expenses. This will help you see where your money goes, and where it should be going.

Make a budget.

Once you have taken a "snapshot" of your spending through number 2 above, you're now ready to make a realistic budget. It sounds so simple that it's easy to say this is a given. However, the truth is, not many people sit down and make a budget. A budget will help you to avoid overspending so you will reach your goals in the future. It will also make you see how much money you expect to come in—and this will guide you on how best to allocate this money inflow. If you see that you have been spending so much on gas, see if you can plan your trips better so you can save. Or if you see that you've been eating out too often, trim this down to a manageable expense per month. Try to keep within your budget. With the use of a logbook or money management software, you can easily make a budget. Make categories for each expense. Other people use the envelope system: they put in cash in envelopes marked for certain expenses. If toward the end of the month, there's no more cash inside the "eating out" envelope, then you should restrain yourself from eating out. Be disciplined; you will reap the benefits later.

Save for an emergency fund.

It is important to have a "rainy day fund" which will tide you over when emergencies happen—a job loss or illness, for instance. Every month before you spend your money, take out ten percent or more and deposit this in a special account you open for this purpose. Financial experts advise that you should have at least six months' worth of expenses in this fund. Don't touch this fund unless real emergencies happen. Make this fund grow. You can transfer this to a higher-yielding investment vehicle later on.

Cover the basics.

If you are the head of the family, make sure that you get adequate life insurance coverage. This will help your family get back on their feet in the event of your untimely death. Also make sure to get health insurance for you and your family. It is costly to get sick, and if you're not prepared, hospital bills may wipe out all your life savings. Protect your assets too. Get home insurance for your house and a comprehensive auto insurance for your car. Accidents may happen, and having insurance will help you with the costs incurred in the future.

Save for your retirement.

The earlier you start, the smaller the amount you need to put in to secure a comfortable retirement.

Find ways to cut down on your expenses.

We all tend to splurge on some things – maybe it's clothes or books or gadgets. Before purchasing any item, ask yourself if you really need it. This will help you curb unnecessary spending, which will put a dent in your budget. There are always ways to minimize your spending. If you love gourmet coffee, for instance, brew your own coffee at home and bring a Thermos to work, rather than get your java fix every week from the coffee shop at the corner. When going to a place where there are parking options, go for self-parking rather than valet parking to save more. Little things like these go a long way to stretching your budget.

These are just a few money resolutions you can do this 2008. Remember, to be successful, you have to be disciplined and consistent. Happy New Year!

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Maharlika – Opinyon

EDITORIAL

Save it

The pending national government budget for 2008 will not only be the biggest ever at the proposed P1.227 trillion. It will also be, quite possibly, the richest in political ironies. We have here a perplexing case of role reversal: a Senate that famously took its time in deliberating on the administration's previous budget proposals (to such an extent that it was routinely blamed for delayed or rolled-over budgets) is defending the allocations as Malacañang, by and large, proposed. On the other hand, a House that infamously used to pass the President's budget proposal exactly as it was proposed is insisting on cutting some of the fat it sees.

Unfortunately, all this attention has obscured the crucial importance of a key issue—and the unsatisfactory proposals issued by the Senate and the House to resolve it. We are talking about the exchange rate assumptions that Malacañang's budget planners used in drafting the proposed General Appropriations Act of 2008.

Interest payments, as is standard in the post-Marcos years, constitute the biggest single allocation in the budget. This year, the amount is P295.7 billion, based on an assumed exchange rate of P46-48 to the dollar. As many politicians from both sides of the legislative aisle have pointed out, the current rate is much lower, at less than P42. That means a saving of at least P4 per dollar, or as much as P24 billion on interest payments alone.

What do we do with those potential savings?

The House proposal is to cut some P17.8 billion from the debt service allocation and realign the money by allocating it to social services. The Senate counter-proposal is to restore to the debt service allocation some P12.1 billion of the P17.8 billion that the House has cut with unfamiliar and unsettling temerity. Only about P5.7 billion will be realigned, from debt service to social services.

The real question remains unasked: Should the potential exchange rate saving—whether computed at P17.8 billion as the House originally wanted or P5.7 billion as the Senate estimates—be realigned, that is, used for another purpose, or should they be left unused, as real saving?

We certainly need all the money we can pour into social services, including funding the many requirements of the Department of Health. Taking a few billions in one pocket and putting them in another seems like a convenience, especially when the second pocket will save more lives or improve our overall quality of life. But we've had enough of short cuts, haven't we? We should be able to justify bigger budgets for social services not because of a temporary easing in the exchange rate, but because we have done the hard math. Otherwise, it may be better to simply keep the government from spending the billions it will manage to save.

2007 Philippine Daily Inquirer

Filipino of the Year

It was early December, a month ago.

We were freezing our butts off in London after having just braved the cold to walk to the Underground. When we got there, I wasn't sure the Oyster card I had with me—that's the equivalent of the Metro Rail Transit stored-value card in Metro Manila, though one you just kept adding value to through the slot machines—carried enough amount for the trip. The slot machine wasn't working so I went over to the booth.

The booth was manned by a middle-aged Asian with graying hair and a pleasant face. It wasn't late in the day, it must have been 5:30 p.m. or so, but it was as dark as 9:00 p.m. and there weren't too many people around. Before we got to the booth, I asked my daughter, Miranda, if she had loose change so I wouldn't have to use bills.

When it was my turn, the Asian asked, smiling, "Pinoy ba kayo?" ["Are you Filipino?"]

He was glad to see us, and when we told him we were just passing through, he asked how things were home. He had of course heard about the events at Pen, but he wasn't really concerned with that. He was more concerned about how we still celebrated Christmas. He hadn't been home in some time and last he saw the country turned Christmas-y in October. I said the duration might have gotten shorter but the passion—or inebriation—with which we celebrated it had not.

He wished us well and punched in a couple more pounds on my card than I had paid.

London was crawling with Filipinos. The hotel we stayed in, the Royal Horseguards, harbored about 20, some of them part-time. Miranda got to learn about it at breakfast when a waiter recognized her, having The Filipino Channel at home, and took a picture of them together on his cell phone. The Pinoy was less than five feet, as gay as they come, and walked and talked (with a British accent) with complete confidence. He it was who apprised us of the "Filipino Mafia" in the hotel, as the other staff members called them, which included bellhop, lobby supervisor, waiter and laundry help.

Later, another Filipino who had been there for more than 30 years—more than half her life, she said; she started out as domestic and worked her way up to desk clerk in a big department store—swore there was no hospital in London that didn't have a Filipino nurse in it. She should know, she said, because her husband who had just had a heart-valve operation, paid for by health insurance, had a whole slew of Filipino nurses to take care of him. Many hospitals there, she said, had no less than a full score of Filipino nurses in them. The influx apparently began sometime in the mid-1990s when Britain experienced a scarcity of nurses and opened its doors to applicants from abroad. Unfortunately, as my informant warned, that well has dried up, the demand for nurses has dropped to a trickle.

I have no hesitation about picking my Filipino of the Year for 2007: That is the overseas Filipino worker, or OFW.

The OFW had the most impact on the country last year—for the last few years in fact but particularly dramatically last year when they brought the dollar crashing down. Unfortunately, the OFWs' impact on the country has been both positive and negative, the source as much of its tragedy as of its glory, as much of its weakness as of its strength, as much of its undoing as of its survival.

It is the source of the livelihood of probably now a tenth of the population, counting the undocumented. The "wandering Jew" has been replaced by the "wandering Filipino," the latter to be found in the steppes of Russia as on the steps of Rome's cathedrals, in the remotest parts of Africa as on the glittering cities of Europe. But it is the source as well of enormous grief, most of the OFWs taking on menial jobs, except in places like Dubai and parts of the United States where they work as engineers, architects, doctors and IT personnel. Occupying as they do the lowest rungs of the social strata, they are often prey to abuse, discrimination and various physical and moral indignities.

Overseas work is the No. 1 home-maker in this country, it is the No. 1 home-breaker in this country: Without it this country would perish in the blink of an eye, with it families are breaking up in the blink of an eye. Overseas work has stemmed uncontrollable dollar-drain, overseas work has made possible unparalleled brain-drain—doubly tragically in that Filipino doctors are becoming nurses to find work abroad. Overseas work allows this country to get by economically, overseas work allows this government to get by tyrannically: It is the one thing that has prevented the "social volcano," near to bursting from the roiling magma of corruption and injustice, from exploding by offering a safety valve.

But the greatest impact the OFW has had on this country I glimpsed some years ago on a visit to the United States. I was looking over the cameras in a shop in San Francisco when a clerk came up to me. He was a Filipino and was thrilled to know I was one too. In broad strokes, he told me how he had come to the United States virtually penniless after spending a fortune to get there illegally and had worked his way in that shop from driver to supervisor of the electronics section. He advised me --as proof of his newfound status—not to buy a camera that day but to wait a couple of weeks, since he knew for a fact the store was planning a huge sale when prices would really plunge. I said I didn't have time—I was going home in a couple of days.

It took him a full minute to answer. He stood there in a state of shock as though a bolt of lightning had just hit him. Finally, he blurted: "Why?"

The greatest impact of the OFW is to have reversed the equation. Yesterday you asked why when a Filipino proposed to live abroad. Today you ask why when a Filipino proposes to come home.

THERE'S THE RUB

By CONRADO DE QUIROS
Philippine Daily Inquirer

'A very slender and short man'

It's the start of yet another year and I'm planning yet another visit to the historical shrines and landmarks I have seen so many times before. Why do I do this, when most people visit these places once and never again? If you take the trouble to see old things in a new way, everything—a book, an artifact, an old document, a historic place or landmark—can yield things you overlooked previously. Every year I visit the historic shrines close to Manila: the Rizal Shrines in Fort Santiago, Intramuros and Calamba, Laguna (perhaps even Dapitan in Zambonga del Norte if time and budget permit); the Emilio Aguinaldo Shrine in Kawit and the lesser known but nearby Baldomero Aguinaldo Shrine. The humble house where Apolinario Mabini expired from cholera has been moved to a new site, but the house is intact and continues to inspire. Just listing down all the places I have to visit this year will fill two columns.

I want to visit Emilio Aguinaldo's Kawit house this year after rereading Murat Halstead's account of his interview with Aguinaldo in 1898, when he accompanied US General Merritt on a visit. Halstead wanted to know Aguinaldo's opinion on US military authority over the islands that had just been declared independent from Spain. He also wanted to know Aguinaldo's position on Spanish friars because this was one of the main spark plugs to the Philippine Revolution. What did Aguinaldo plan to do with them? Then there was the question of attaining recognition for the Philippines as a free and independent country since the superpowers at war—Spain and the United States—were already drafting a Peace Treaty in Paris and there was no Philippine representation at the bargaining table.

History has answered Halstead's questions, so it is best to re-read this account to see other details that help us put some flesh into the Aguinaldo memorialized in tacky postcards and immortalized in monuments of bronze and stone.

The interview was held in a house in Bacoor, Cavite that served as Aguinaldo's headquarters. Halstead landed near Bacoor church in a banca and described the place as a small village with houses made of bamboo. Then as now the streets were hot and dusty and lined with fruit stands. Aguinaldo's HQ was described as follows: "The General's house was about as solid a structure as earthquakes permit, its roof of red tile instead of the usual straw. His rooms were in the second storey, reached by a broad stairway, at the top of which was a landing of liberal dimensions and an ante-room. The General was announced at home and engaged in writing a letter to General Merritt—then his rather regular daily exercise. There were a dozen insurgent soldiers at the door, and as many more at the foot and head of the stairs, with several officers, all in military costume, the privates carrying Spanish Mausers and the officers wearing swords. We were admitted to an inner room, with a window opening on the street, and told the general would see us directly. Meanwhile well-dressed ladies of his family passed through the audience room from the General's office to the living rooms, giving a pleasant picture of domesticity.

"The door from the study opened and a very slender and short man entered with a preoccupied look that quickly became curious. An attendant said in a low voice, 'General Aguinaldo.' He was unexpectedly small (could weigh but little over 100 pounds) dressed in pure white, and his modesty of bearing would have become a maiden. The first feeling was a sort of faint compassion that one with such small physical resources should have to bear the weighty responsibilities resting upon him. The interpreter was a man shorter than the general, but not quite so slight. His hair was immensely black and he wore glasses. He is an accomplished linguist, speaks English with facility and is acknowledged by the priests to be the equal of any of them in reading and speaking Latin. It is to be remarked that while Aguinaldo is not a man of high education he has as associates in his labors for Philippine Independence a considerable number of scholarly men. It is related that in a recent discussion between a priest and an insurgent, the latter stated that as a ground of rebellion that the Spaniards did nothing for the education of the people, and was asked, 'Where did you get your education?' He had been taught by the Jesuits."

Last year I wrote a column about an Englishman meeting Aguinaldo in Cavite around the same time and his first impression just like the above was how this small and unassuming man could lead a nation to independence through warfare. I guess the same could be said of people who meet Gloria Arroyo for the first time. We always imagine people in power to be big and strong, but then some of the best surprises come from small packages. Re-reading all these contemporary news reports and interviews with Aguinaldo makes a visit to historic shrines and landmarks more interesting. Where did they stand and discuss? What food did they eat? Who was this multi-lingual interpreter wearing eyeglasses? Critics say all this is trivial, but if it will give life to our history and make people sit up and see things in a new light this new year then we must go for it.

LOOKING BACK

By AMBETH OCAMPO
Inquirer

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu.

Maharlika – Samu't Sari

GIG EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Catherine "Kate" Tabora, cocktail waitress/bartender of GIG Discotheque was awarded the Employee of the Year plum for her outstanding work ethics and commitment. Flanking her are NIS Personnel officer Terry Kisa and Financial Comptroller Letty Santos.

BIRTHDAY PARTY CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Jannet Orosco flashes the peace sign as she celebrates her 10th birthday with family members and friends at McDonald's Middle Road on Wednesday night.

WELCOME PARTY

The Chavez family—Elmer, Bing, Krystele Anne and Joshua Isaac—are joined by former Saipan residents during a welcome party held for the Chavezes upon their arrival in Vancouver, Canada on Dec. 29, 2007. Several former Saipan residents have already relocated to the North American country to seek greener pastures.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

DANCE CONCERT CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Alysa Benavente and Erica Faye Tubera, with Project Impact Dancers gather for a photo after performing in Demalyn Sablan's Concert last Dec 28,2007.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Alysa Benavente and Demalyn Sablan strike a pose during Demalyn's Concert last Dec 28,2007.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Jolly BeeDa Kid Sing and Dance Contest winners Erica Faye Tubera and Alysa Benavente on Demalyn Sablan's Concert last Dec 28, 2007.

Youngstyle

Election 2008: The race is on

By MICHAEL D. SHEAR
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

This week Americans begin voting on who will be the next president of the United States. You would think that wouldn't take very long, but it does—almost a year. And it all starts Thursday in Iowa. Political reporter Michael D. Shear explains the process.

AP

Reporters in the CNN studios in New York City follow the results of the Iowa caucuses Thursday, Jan. 3, 2008.

2008 CAMPAIGN TIMELINE

Jan. 3—First caucus (Iowa)
Jan. 8—First primary (New Hampshire)
Feb. 5—Super Tuesday (more than 20 primaries and caucuses)
Feb. 12—Primaries in Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia
June 3—Final primary (South Dakota)
Aug. 25—Democratic convention opens (Denver)
Sept. 1—Republican convention opens (Minneapolis)
Nov. 4—Election Day
Jan. 20, 2009—Inauguration Day (new president sworn in)

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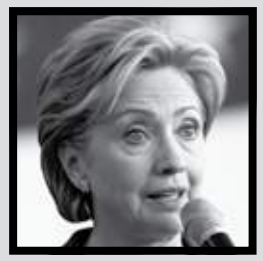
THE CANDIDATES

The following are the presidential candidates of the two major parties.

DEMOCRATS

Joe Biden
U.S. senator, Delaware



Hillary Rodham Clinton
U.S. senator, New York

Christopher Dodd
U.S. senator, Connecticut

John Edwards
Former U.S. senator, North Carolina

Mike Gravel
Former U.S. senator, Alaska

Dennis Kucinich
U.S. House member, Ohio

Barack Obama
U.S. senator, Illinois

Bill Richardson
Governor, New Mexico

REPUBLICANS

Rudy Giuliani
Former mayor, New York City

Mike Huckabee
Former governor, Arkansas

Duncan Hunter
U.S. House member, California

Alan Keyes
Former diplomat

John McCain
U.S. senator, Arizona

Ron Paul
U.S. House member, Texas

Mitt Romney
Former governor, Massachusetts

Fred Thompson
Former senator, Tennessee

NOTE: Several other people are running for president as independents or so-called third-party candidates. ***© 2008, The Washington Post***

THE CANDIDATES

Several states hold contests such as the one in Iowa on Thursday. It's a little like a Pokemon battle: The Democrat who wins the most state contests between now and June will captain that party's team, while the Republican who wins the most will lead the other team.

They'll face off in a national election in November. There could be other names, from minor political parties, on the November ballot, but the Republican and Democratic parties are so big that the winner—our next president—is likely to be the captain of one of these two teams.

There are two types of state contests—primaries and caucuses—in which voters pick captains for their party's team. The first caucus this year is Iowa's; the first primary is Tuesday in New Hampshire.

HOW A CAUCUS WORKS

Any registered voter can take part in a caucus. The meetings are held locally, maybe in a school gym, a church basement or even someone's family room. Democrats and Republicans meet separately.

At these meetings, people talk—and sometimes argue—about who should be captain of their team. When they're done talking, they split up. Each candidate's supporters go to a different part of the room and a headcount is taken. The candidate with the most supporters wins that voting place.

At the end of the night, hundreds of voting places from all over the state are counted. The candidate who has won the most voting places wins the state.

More than a dozen states also will hold caucuses this year.

HOW A PRIMARY WORKS

In a primary, people don't gather in one place at the same time. Instead, they go to an assigned voting place at some point in the day. Schools and fire stations often are used as voting places. They open early and stay open into the evening.

Inside the voting place, sometimes called polls, are several private spaces. These contain voting machines—some are computers—where each voter touches a screen, presses a button or makes a check mark for the candidate he or she wants.

After the polls close, the votes are added up and a winner is declared.

More than 40 states will hold primaries this year.

THE POLITICAL CONVENTIONS

This summer, after all of the state contests are over, each political party will hold a convention to officially choose its presidential nominee. A nominee for vice president also will be picked, giving the party its "ticket."

The Democrats will meet in Denver in August. The Republicans will gather a week later in Minneapolis.

At that point, both major teams will have their captains. In November we'll know which one gets to live in the White House for the next four years.

You have questions? We have answers

Q. Why do people use the color red for Republicans and blue for Democrats?

A. That started in 2000 with the colored maps the TV networks had to show which party was winning. States that voted for the Republican were colored red; those that voted for the Democrat were blue.

Q. Why do Democrats have a donkey for a mascot, and Republicans an elephant?

A. It hasn't always been that way. Some Democrats used to use a rooster; others made the Statue of Liberty their symbol. The donkey dates to Andrew Jackson, whose opponents in the election of 1828 called him a "jackass." Cartoonists picked up on the image, and by 1880 the donkey was the party's mascot.

Republicans once had an eagle as a mascot. Again, it was cartoonists who came up with the elephant as a symbol. An 1874 cartoon by Thomas Nast cemented that image for the party.

Q. Why are Republicans called the GOP?

A. In 1875 there was a reference to Republicans as a "gallant old party." Since the 1880s, however, the initials have stood for "grand old party."

Q. What's the difference between Republicans and Democrats?

A. That's a big question. They agree on some things, but disagree a lot. Their biggest difference right now is over the war in Iraq. Most Republican politicians, including President Bush, say we are winning and want to keep fighting. Most Democrats disagree and want to bring U.S. troops home sooner.

Q. Why does it matter who is president?

A. The president is the leader of the country, just like your principal is in charge of your school. The president decides what the country's priorities are, at home and abroad, and puts policies and programs in place to achieve those goals. Not all power is centered in the White House, however. The president must obey laws passed by Congress and the rulings of the Supreme Court.

(© 2008, The Washington Post)

At Koshland Museum, a healthy dose of science

By SANDRA G. BOODMAN
(C) 2007, THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—Have you ever wondered why kids get so many shots, or whether the climate has changed in the past 500 years, or which scientific discoveries are considered most important?

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, you might be interested in a trip to the Marian Koshland Science Museum in downtown Washington. The three-year-old museum, part of the National Academy of Sciences, is designed for middle-schoolers and older students.

Compared with the gigantic National Air and Space Museum, the Koshland museum is very small. But it has interesting things to see and—here's a big plus—no crowds, so visitors rarely have to wait in line to check out the interactive exhibits.

The newest display, which opened this year, is on infectious diseases. The others are about global warming and scientific wonders.

Perhaps you have heard your parents or grandparents talk about measles and polio. At the museum you'll learn that kids now get shots that protect them from these and other diseases that were once common—and greatly feared because they caused paralysis, blindness or death.

Infectious diseases are spread from person to person. They include colds, flu and tuberculosis. Many are caused by viruses or bacteria.

One part of the exhibit lets you pretend to be a doctor and see how far the flu would spread during a severe outbreak if you give vaccinations to more—or fewer—people. A red dot on a large map shows the first flu victim. Tiny red dots spread or disappear depending on the number of people vaccinated.

The climate exhibit lets you test how different actions, including turning down the thermostat two degrees in winter, could reduce greenhouse gases that cause global warming.

One of the most enjoyable displays lets you grab a joystick and navigate a twinkly, 3-D satellite view of Earth at night, comparing energy use all over the world.

IF YOU GO

The Marian Koshland Science Museum is located at Sixth and E streets NW in Washington, near the Gallery Place/Chinatown and Judiciary Square subway stations. Hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The museum is closed Tuesdays. Admission is $5 for adults, $3 for kids. For more information, visit www.koshland-science-museum.org or call 202-334-1201.

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THE WASHINGTON POST

The Marian Koshland Science Museum in Washington, part of the National Academy of Sciences, is designed for middle-schoolers and older students. The climate exhibit lets you test how different actions could reduce greenhouse gases that cause global warming.

BOOK REVIEW

"Paint the Wind," by Pam Munoz Ryan
Ages 7-10

Pam Munoz Ryan loved reading about horses when she was young. Among her favorites were "Misty of Chincoteague" and "King of the Wind" by Marguerite Henry.

Ryan's family couldn't afford to get her a horse, or even riding lessons. So when she decided to write this book about horses, she went out of her way to learn about them. She spent hundreds of hours taking lessons and being around horses so that "Paint the Wind" would seem real.

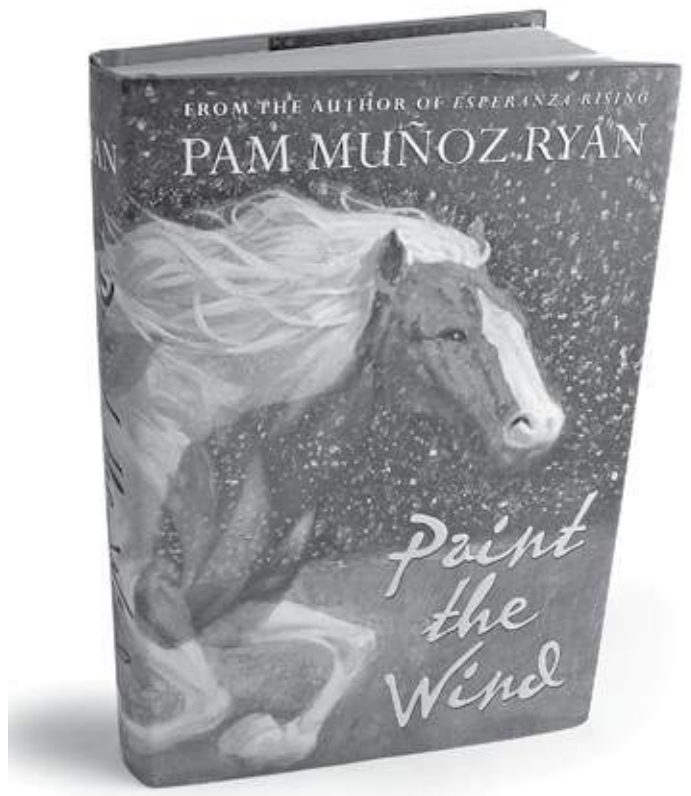
You might be familiar with Ryan's earlier book "Esperanza Rising," about a spoiled rich girl forced from a life of luxury in Mexico to a farm laborer camp in California. "Paint the Wind" is also about a young girl from a wealthy family whose life takes a sudden twist.

Maya's parents died in an accident. She lives a very isolated life with her strict, nervous grandmother. Housekeepers watch her constantly. She is not allowed to have friends or many toys. Even so, in some ways Maya is not a very sympathetic character. She lies and takes advantage of people sometimes.

When her grandmother dies, Maya is sent to live with relatives in Wyoming, where she falls in love with the horses — especially the wild ones. A mare called Artemisia holds special meaning because it has ties to Maya's mother and is a symbol of the freedom Maya craves. Ensuring that freedom for the horse and herself proves to be a dangerous task.

This is not a great horse story like "National Velvet" or "The Red Pony," but for kids who love horses it is a fun adventure.

(c) 2007, The Washington Post



"Paint the Wind," by Pam Munoz Ryan, is about a young girl from a wealthy family whose life takes a sudden twist.

THE WASHINGTON POST

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

A protected cave

On Jan. 3, 1903, a South Dakota "hole that breathes cool air" became the first cave to be protected by the National Park Service. Wind Cave was formed over 300 million years. It's the world's fourth-longest cave — with more than 126 miles mapped by explorers. The cave is known for its abundance of boxwork, a rare formation of calcite in a honeycomb pattern.

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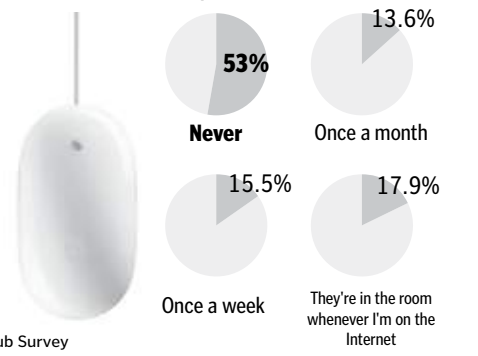
»it's about« YOU

. . . and Internet Time

More than half of kids surveyed do not have their parents watching over their Internet use.

How often do your parents surf the Internet with you?



SOURCE: Boys & Girls Club Survey

THE WASHINGTON POST

Every day is a cause to celebrate

Did you get a new calendar over the holidays? If so, it probably has lots of important dates marked on it, such as Mother's Day and the first day of summer. There are lots of other, less important dates to take note of this year, too. Here are some of our favorite "holidays." You can keep this story all year as a handy reference. That way you won't forget when National Fresh Breath Day is.

JANUARY
Oatmeal Month
20: Penguin Awareness Day
24: National Compliment Day
28: Bubble Wrap Appreciation Day

FEBRUARY
1: Hula in the Coola Day
5: International Pancake Day
14: Ferris Wheel Day
23: Curling Is Cool Day

MARCH
National Frozen Food Month
9: Panic Day
16: Lips Appreciation Day
22: International Goof-Off Day

APRIL
National Kite Month
17: National High Five Day
29: National Hairball Awareness Day
30: Hairstylist Appreciation Day

MAY
2: No Pants Day
3: Lumpy Rug Day
12: Limerick Day
16: National Pizza Party Day
13: Blame Someone Else Day
26: National Handshake Day
29: Log Cabin Day

JULY
3: Compliment Your Mirror Day
6-12: Be Nice to New Jersey Week
13: Embrace Your Geekness Day
27: Take Your Houseplant for a Walk Day

AUGUST
6: National Fresh Breath Day
19: Aviation Day
22: Be an Angel Day
26: National Dog Day

SEPTEMBER
National Piano Month
1-5: National Waffle Week
9: Wonderful Weirdos Day
26: Love Note Day

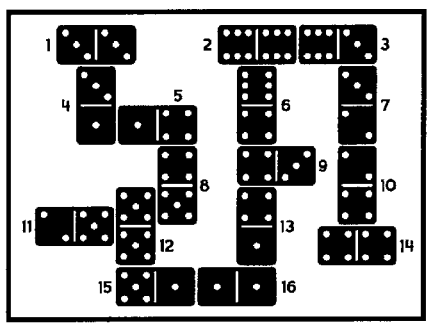
OCTOBER
National Popcorn Poppin' Month
Spinach Lovers Month
10: National Cake Decoration Day
31: National Magic Day

NOVEMBER
6: Saxophone Day
8: Cook Something Bold and Pungent Day
14: National American Teddy Bear Day
21: World Hello Day

DECEMBER
4: National Dice Day
5: Bathtub Party Day
15: Cat Herders Day
21: Humbug Day

(c) 2008, The Washington Post

JUNE
National Candy Month

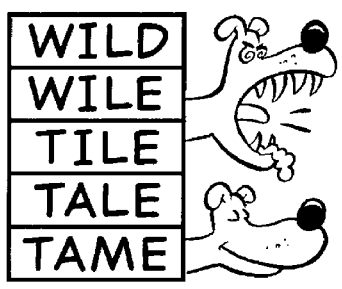


TROUBLE IN THE "BONEYARD"! Two of the "bones" in the above game of Dominoes are the same. Can you find them in less than one minute?

Answer: Bones 5 and 13.

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend



TRY TAMING THESE PUZZLES!

In this type of puzzle you are given a word that must be changed into another word in a series of moves. During each move, you must change one letter in the previous word so as to form a new word. In our example, we changed WILD to TAME in four moves. See if you can change the following five words in four moves.

1. FACE to LIFT
2. HAND to BOOK
3. NECK to TIES
4. TIME to CARD
5. LEFT to HAND

Answers:
1. FACE, LACE, LICE, LIFE, LIFT.
2. HAND, HANK, HONK, HOOK, BOOK.
3. NECK, NICK, TICK, TICS, TIES.
4. TIME, TIRE, TARE, CARE, CARD.
5. LEFT, LENT, LEND, LAND, HAND.

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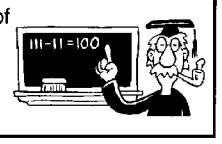
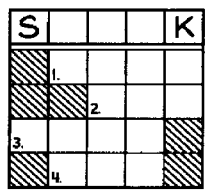
MANY WAYS TO REACH 100! Using five identical digits, can you come up with three other ways of writing an equation that equals 100?



Answers: (33 x 3) + 3/3 = (5 x 5 x 5) - (5 x 5) = (5 + 5 + 5 + 5) x 5 = 100

FIND-A-WORD! On the top line is our mystery word. You need to fill in the missing letters. Clue words (smaller words contained in letter-by-letter order within the mystery word) are defined below.

1. Recreational land.
2. Mentioned in the Bible.
3. What boxers do.
4. An expert golf score.



Answers: 1. Park. 2. Ark. 3. Spar. 4. Par. Mystery word: Spark.

2 canine companions

This month's book recommendations are perfect for curling up with beside the fireplace or, better yet, beside a furry friend to pass a winter evening.

"100 Dogs Who Changed Civilization" by Sam Stall (Quirk Books, $14.95) is an brisk and entertaining read full of facts that you'll be pausing to tell your significant other all about. Such as this fun tidbit: The first movie-star collie wasn't named Lassie, but Blair, and the series of silent movies Blair starred in as "Rover" helped popularize that now-cliched moniker for dogs.

Not all these dogs are obscure, however. Among those profiled are Seaman, the huge Labrador on Lewis and Clark's expedition; Laika, the first Earthling in space; and Peritas, Alexander the Great's dog. And not all of those featured directly affected civilization, but they played important roles nonetheless. This is an enchanting book that will keep you turning the pages to read the next heroic story.

Anna Quindlen's memoir, "Good Dog. Stay." (Random House, $14.95), is a heartwarming read to which anyone who has ever been with a pet through life—and death—can relate. The Pulitzer Prize-winning author talks about life with best friend Beau,

a rambunctious black Labrador retriever. There are a lot of long-winded true stories about furry best friends on the bookshelves, but this one, with its spare style, grabs the reader right from the start and doesn't let go. Interspersed throughout the book are black-and-white portraits of many different dogs that keep one anchored to the text until well past bedtime. Give a copy of this book as a worthy gift to any dog lover, and get a copy for yourself as well.

■ ■ ■

Send your tips, questions and comments to Paws Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475, or e-mail them to pawscorner@hotmail.com.

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Strange BUT TRUE

By SAMANTHA WEAVER

■ If you've ever suffered from thermostat wars at your office, you might be interested in the following fact: Those who research such things conducted a study in 2004 on office temperatures. The results showed that workers were less productive and made more mistakes when office temperatures dropped from 77 F to 68 F.

■ Anyone who has read her works will not be surprised to learn that it was 19th- century novelist Jane Austen, one of the most widely read and best-loved writers in British literature, who made the following observation: "There certainly are not so many men of large fortune in the world as there are pretty women to deserve them."

■ You might be unsurprised to learn that the word "mortgage" shares the same Latin root meaning as the terms "rigor mortis" and "mortician." "Mortgage" literally means "death pledge."

■ Records indicate that in 1925, movie stuntmen (and yes, they were all men in those days) earned $7 to $8 per day for basic stunts. They got extra pay for certain activities, though; jumping from an airplane to a train was worth $150, for instance. Any stuntman who parachuted out of an exploding plane would get $500, and it was worth $1,500 to crash a plane into a house or a tree. Considering the state of technology and safety standards of the day, it's no wonder that between 1925 and 1930, 55 people were killed while performing movie stunts, and another 10,000 were injured.

■ Every year the town of Brevard in North Carolina celebrates its unusual local fauna with an entire festival dedicated to white squirrels. Yes, squirrels.

■ ■ ■

Thought for the Day: "An ostentatious man will rather relate a blunder or an absurdity he has committed, than be debarred from talking of his own dear person." —Joseph Addison

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MAGIC MAZE ● UNITED STATES SAVINGS BONDS

X Q N K I F Y D A X V T Q O M
F J H I F C C T A Y W U R P N
A B E N E F I C I A R Y L S S
C J H T F D B N L R Z X D T D
E M V E A T R Q O O U N M F N
V U E R K D I H W R O T P I O
A F S E D B E Z R B T Y A G B
L W V S D T R U I Q O C P M E
U N L T I E H H S E I R E S /
E K I H F E R D K S C A R L E
Z M R E T A R S G N I N R A E

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Beneficiary	Gifts	Low risk	Reissue
Earnings rate	I Bonds	Maturity	Series HH
EE/E Bonds	Interest	Paper	Term
Electronic	Issue date	Redeem	

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	−		x		14
÷		+		−	
	+		x		25
+		x		x	
	+		+		23
10		18		16	

1 2 3 3 5 6 7 8 9

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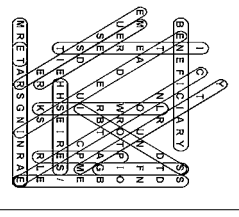
MAGIC MAZE ANSWER



GO FIGURE ANSWER

23	8	+	6	+	9
	x		x		+
25	5	x	2	+	3
	−		+		÷
14	7	x	1	−	3

Finding a place for kids' stuff

If one of your New Year's resolutions is decluttering and organizing your kids' stuff, don't put the job at the bottom of your list. The first week in January is a perfect time to start with these practical tips and ideas that help you collect and sort the clutter. Once you have designated a place for everything, the kids can take over at "pick-up" time.

"Shoe" stuff away

Most toys and games can be easily stored in labeled bins and baskets, but what about the stragglers, like Matchbox cars, yo-yos and decks of cards? See-through, plastic hanging pocket shoe holders are an inexpensive practical solution. Attach one to the back of a closet or bedroom door at your child's height. Encourage kids to regularly sort and store their favorite things.

Tip: Hang a pocket shoe holder by your back door for organizing hats, mittens, sunglasses and umbrellas.

Make art portfolios for keepsake paintings, drawings, stories and poems

Find a sturdy corrugated square cardboard box approximately 20 inches by 20 inches. Cut off the top and bottom. Flatten the box along two of the side folds. Cut the flattened box in half vertically using the other two side folds as a guide. You will now have two portfolios. Your child can paint the cardboard with poster paint or cover it with colorful self-adhesive-backed paper or wallpaper. On the inside, tape a large mailing envelope to store small drawings. For larger paintings, tape a 6-inch-by-20-inch strip of poster board on three sides near the centerfold to create a pocket. Poke holes through the portfolio to attach a ribbon for closing. Decorate the outside with a favorite painting or your child's picture.

Hide it under the bed

Flat gift-wrap storage bins that fit under the bed are often on sale this time of year. Use them as a "Treasure box" for souvenirs, photos and award certificates your child collects throughout the new year. Periodically, go through the collection and keep only the best of the best.

Tip: If you have extra-large paintings that don't fit the art portfolio, wind the art around a recycled cardboard gift-wrap tube, secure with a paper clip or rubber band, and store in the treasure box.

■ ■ ■

Donna Erickson's award-winning television series "Donna's Day" airs on public television nationwide. Visit www.donnasday.com to find out when it airs on your local PBS station and to sign up for Donna's e-newsletter.

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Life & Style

Dear old dad wants to tell son not to marry this girl

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: I have been faithfully married for more than 20 years. My wife and I are known as the "cute couple" who still hold hands in public, take time to play together, and never say a negative word about each other in public.

My son, who has just turned 19, wants to marry somebody "just like Mom," whom he views as the world's greatest wife and mother. He's making good on this and has begun getting serious with a young woman who is much like his mother in many crucial ways.

At this point, how do I tell my son that the biggest mistake of my life was marrying his mother, and his future happiness depends on getting away from this girl before it's too late? The girl he is dating shows the same severe anxiety disorders as my wife, and manipulates him through learned helplessness and (presumably) the same psychosomatic chronic illnesses. She displays the severe mood swings that have made my wife completely ineffectual as a mother and companion.

My wife's disorders completely dominate our lives, as she refuses any therapy. I have had no choice but to surrender and make do, abandoning a wonderful career—Ph.D. from a top business school, lots of international travel and high ambitions—to live in squalor and relative poverty, hating my life and longing for the freedom that will come from one or the other of us passing on.

I have done a good job of hiding my agony from my wife and children, accepting that which I cannot change, and I have been careful to be as supportive as possible and never undercut her position in her eyes or the kids'. My son shows the same potential that I once had. How do I help him not ruin his life as I have ruined mine?

MISERABLE IN THE NORTHEAST

DEAR MISERABLE: First, remind your son that marriage should be postponed until he completes his education. Then realize that although you want to help him avoid the disappointment and frustration that you have experienced, you may not be able to save him after keeping him blindfolded all these years.

A giant step in the right direction would be to sit him down and tell him exactly what you have told me. And when you do, point out that because you did not confront the problem and insist that your wife get treatment for her emotional problems, you became her enabler, because in addition to her illness, your failure to intervene is what ruined your marriage.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I have an etiquette question. When going out for an office luncheon in honor of someone's departure, new hire, baby shower, etc., and the boss is picking up the tab, is it proper to order what you really want from the menu?

For example: If six people at the table order soup and salad, but what I really want is the salmon stuffed with crabmeat, would that be considered improper, even though the boss says, "Order whatever you want"?

KAT IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

DEAR KAT: Usually when a host treats guests to lunch, he or she will set an example by saying, "I'm having the ( ), but feel free to order whatever you'd like." If the entree the boss selects costs $15, then the polite guest should stay within that limit.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more attractive person, order "How to Be Popular." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

'Lohan back on sobriety track'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Lindsay Lohan rang in the New Year drinking champagne in Italy, her lawyer says, but is "back on track" in terms of sobriety. A video obtained by The Associated Press shows Lohan, who spent much of 2007 in and out of rehab, taking a swig from a champagne bottle while in Capri, Italy.

"After being handed a champagne bottle while on a dance floor in Italy on New Year's Eve and drinking from it, the good news is that Lindsay immediately stopped, called her sponsor, and got herself back on track," her attorney, Blair Berk, said Thursday in a statement. "There is no magic cure here."

"Unfortunately, Lindsay has to share her `one day at a time' with the entire world," Berk said.

Lohan, 21, was in Italy to receive an award at the Capri Hollywood International Film Festival.

Lohan pleaded guilty in August to misdemeanor drunken driving and cocaine charges in two arrests earlier in the year.

As a result, she served 84 minutes in jail in November. She also was sentenced to three years' probation, required to complete an 18-month alcohol-education program and spend 30 days in a residential rehabilitation clinic.

Lohan's screen credits include "Mean Girls" and "Freaky Friday."

AP

In this photo released by Pietro Coccia press office, Monday, Dec. 31, 2007, U.S. actress Lindsay Lohan holds the Capri Global Award, at the Capri Film Festival, in the island of Capri, southern Italy, Sunday, Dec. 30, 2007.

Britney Spears deposed in custody case

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Britney Spears finally appeared Thursday for a deposition in her child-custody battle with Kevin Federline, her ex-husband's lawyer said. Spears was deposed for just 14 minutes, attorney Mark Vincent Kaplan told reporters after the 26-year-old singer left.

Paparazzi sprinted after Spears, who was wearing a hot pink dress and sunglasses, as she drove away from the Century City office tower in a white Mercedes-Benz. Security guards dashed across the driveway to keep photographers on the sidewalk.

Spears called in sick for a Dec. 12 court-ordered deposition, but was photographed that day driving with a friend. She also didn't show up for a session Wednesday, Kaplan said.

Spears' attorneys from the firm Trope and Trope filed a court motion Wednesday asking to be relieved due to a "breakdown" in communication with their client.

Kaplan said Spears' attorneys were present for what became a very abbreviated session.

"The deposition proceeding did go forward today. It was scheduled for 9:45 to 11:45," Kaplan said. "However, it wasn't able to commence until 11:32."

"You can imagine in 14 minutes there's not a lot of time to develop questions," he said.

Kaplan said another deposition will be scheduled.

Is Jay Leno subverting his union?

NEW YORK (AP)—The striking writers union told member Jay Leno on Thursday that he violated its rules by penning and delivering punch lines in his first "Tonight Show" monologue in two months on NBC the night before.

NBC quickly fired back, alleging Leno was right and the Writers Guild of America was wrong.

"The WGA agreement permits Jay Leno to write his own monologue for `The Tonight Show,'" NBC said in a statement Thursday. "The WGA is not permitted to implement rules that conflict with the terms of the collective bargaining agreement between the studios and the WGA."

The agreement between the guild and producers expired Oct. 31 but its terms remain in effect, said Andrea Hartman, executive vice president and deputy general counsel for NBC Universal. She cited federal labor law.

According to the contract, "material written by the person who delivers it on the air" is exempted from the agreement. The exception applies to shows outside prime-time, which includes NBC's "Tonight Show."

Leno did not mention the dispute during Thursday's show, which he opened with another monologue.

For its part, the union argues that it's on firm ground in the context of either its "strike rules" or the expired contract.

"Our position is that our strike rules don't conflict here and, because he's (Leno) always been employed as a writer" on the show, the contract exception doesn't apply to him, said guild spokesman Neal Sacharow.

Sacharow declined comment on whether the guild would move against Leno. But he said any violation of strike rules would be brought before a union compliance committee for evaluation and a recommendation for action.

That could mean a fine or loss of union membership.

Ratings strong for late-night shows

NEW YORK (AP)—Television viewers welcomed late-night hosts with open arms for their first night back at work in two months because of a writers strike. Jay Leno's "Tonight" show on NBC was seen by 7.2 million viewers, or 43 percent more than what he had been averaging this season before the strike took him off the air Nov. 5, according to national ratings supplied by Nielsen Media Research.

David Letterman's "Late Show" on CBS had 5.5 million viewers, 45 percent more than his pre-strike average, Nielsen said.

Leno's writers are still on strike, while Letterman's production company (Worldwide Pants) struck a deal last week to bring his writers back to work.

Later that evening, viewers were more interested in seeing how Conan O'Brien could cope without writers on NBC than how Craig Ferguson could do with them on CBS. Ferguson's show is owned by Worldwide Pants and governed by the same agreement as Letterman.

O'Brien's "Late Night" had 2.8 million viewers, up 37 percent from his pre-strike average, Nielsen said. Ferguson's "Late Late Show" was seen by 2.2 million people, up 28 percent.

Upon their returns Wednesday, a fully bearded Letterman walked onstage amid dancing girls holding picket signs supporting the striking writers. ABC's Jimmy Kimmel, working without writers, called pickets "ridiculous."

The entertainment results Wednesday night were uneven.

Ne-Yo sues R. Kelly promoter over tour

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Ne-Yo claims he was fired as an opening act for R. Kelly because the audience and critics liked him better.

Ne-Yo, whose real name is Shaffer Smith, and Compound Touring Inc., sued the promoter of R. Kelly's tour, Georgia-based Rowe Entertainment Inc., on Monday in Superior Court. The lawsuit, which alleges breach of contract and violation of the right of publicity, seeks unspecified damages.

An e-mail to Rowe Entertainment seeking comment wasn't immediately returned Thursday, but a statement posted on its Web site said the lineup change was solely promoter Leonard Rowe's decision and came about because the company couldn't obtain a "final, fully executed contract" from Ne-Yo's agent.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

MY SNOW FORT MAKES ME INVULNERABLE!
FROM BEHIND ITS THICK WALL, I CAN LAUNCH A BRUTAL SNOWBALL BARRAGE AND REMAIN SAFE FROM RETALIATION!
WHAP!
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO ATTACK FROM THAT SIDE OF THE FORT, DUMMY!!
© 1988 Universal Press Syndicate
WATTERSON
1/5

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

I'VE DONE THINGS IN MY LIFE THAT I REGRET, GARFIELD
AND I'VE DONE THINGS THAT I REGRET...
BUT MAINLY I'VE DONE THINGS YOU REGRET
JIM DAVIS 1-5
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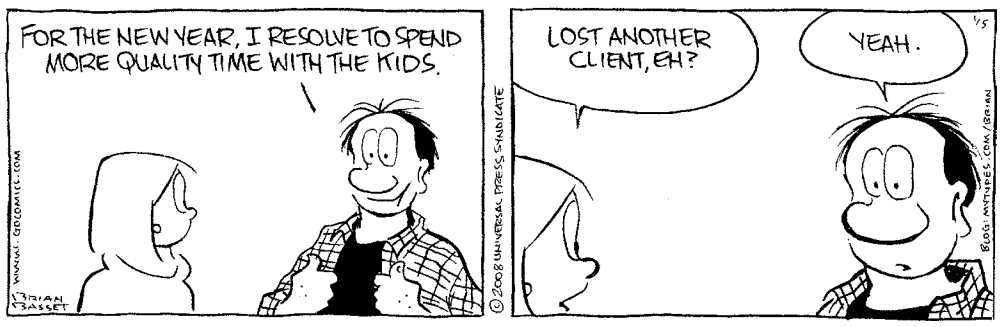
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

SAYS HERE THAT THEY'RE THINKING ABOUT BUILDING A GIANT BORDER FENCE.
DO YOU THINK THAT'LL KEEP THE CATS OUT?
1-5
GLENN MCCOY
2008 Glenn McCoy/Dist. by Universal Press Syndicate
www.gocomics.com

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

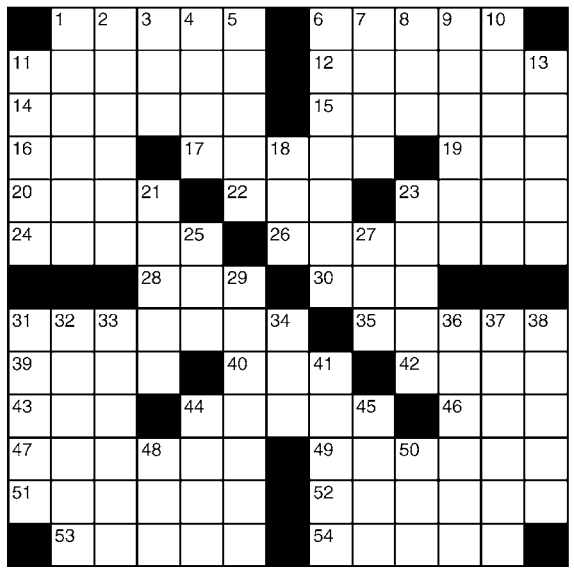
ACROSS
1 "— the nerve!"
6 Analgesic targets
11 "Rome wasn't built —"
12 Extended family members
14 Ilia locale
15 Smooth fabric
16 Pussycat's partner
17 "Forget it!"
19 Commotion
20 Speaker's platform
22 Allow
23 Masticate
24 Church council
26 Dignified women
28 Actor Stephen
30 Romanian money
31 Lists
35 With abundance
39 Doggy bag fill
40 Fa follower
42 Soft cheese
43 Praise in verse
44 Preclude
46 Caviar, essentially
47 Type of temperature scale
49 One searching thoroughly
51 Spit
52 Strata
53 Boutonniere site
54 Abrasive substance

DOWN
1 Unilateral
2 Form ranks
3 Pt. of speech
4 Deposited
5 Disinfectant brand
6 Very important
7 From the beginning
8 Bedridden, maybe
9 "Windtalkers" tribe
10 Home of the Geats
11 Nano and Shuffle
13 Packs away
18 Height of fashion?
21 Categorizes
23 Morsel
25 Sandra or Ruby
27 Earl Grey, for one
29 Weapon collection
31 Castles
32 Trial
33 "Streetcar ..." role
34 Weep
36 One who writes "QED"?
37 Servant's garb
38 They last for months
41 Big dipper?
44 Jackknife, e.g.
45 Paper quantity
48 Special someone
50 Caustic solution

Solution time: 27 mins.

B	U	R	G	S	■	P	O	W	■	O	R	E
O	P	A	R	T	■	A	P	E	■	S	E	X
O	S	T	I	A	■	R	A	T	R	A	C	E
■	■	A	N	I	M	A	L	■	A	G	A	R
A	N	T	■	N	O	D	■	A	D	E	P	T
D	E	A	D	■	V	E	R	D	I	■	■	■
D	O	T	A	G	E	■	A	Z	U	R	E	S
■	■	■	M	A	R	E	S	■	M	U	T	T
G	O	T	A	T	■	L	P	S	■	G	A	Y
A	R	E	S	■	M	A	S	H	E	R	■	■
P	A	C	K	R	A	T	■	E	R	A	S	E
E	T	H	■	I	C	E	■	A	N	T	E	D
D	E	S	■	B	E	D	■	R	O	S	E	S

Yesterday's answer 1-5



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Marilyn Manson, 39; Pamela Sue Martin, 55; Diane Keaton, 62; Robert Duvall, 77

Happy Birthday: Don't be held hostage by a promise you made way back when things were different in your life. Nothing stays the same and you need the freedom to take advantage of some amazing proposals this year. A unique situation will unfold that allows you to maneuver yourself into a very comfortable position. Your numbers are 4, 11, 25, 28, 31, 40

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Take the plunge by getting involved in a learning experience. You owe it to yourself to push for your own success. A couple of strategic moves on your part and doors will open. Love is in the stars. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Address issues dealing with your personal life and the people in it. Be honest, so you can get to the bottom of a stressful situation. Anyone expecting you to pay his or her way or for a mistake made should think again. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): If you love somebody, let him or her know how you feel. The response you get will help you make a decision regarding your future. A move may be in the picture but don't be too quick. ✪✪✪

CANCER (June 21-July 22): A serious decision can be made regarding a partnership you are in. Pull in the reins and refuse to let anyone put you in a vulnerable position. Put an end to the situations that aren't working for you. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Sign up for anything that sounds like fun. You'll be the life of the party, the go-to person, the one everybody wants to spend time with. That doesn't mean you should pay for others. Love and romance are in the stars. ✪✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Step outside your world and try something totally different. A new activity or a group you join will enlighten you, giving you the strength needed to make your own life better. Don't look back. ✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Book yourself on a mini vacation or take time out to spend with the people who appreciate you the most. Love is in the stars. Getting out where you feel safe, relaxed and surrounded with friends will inspire you the most. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Travel plans can be made but make sure your reason behind spending money on a trip is valid. If a trip is meant to strengthen a personal relationship, do it but stick to your budget. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Don't move in haste to make changes. Take time to observe others' reactions. Your timing isn't quite right and launching something before its time will backfire. An argument with a partner may lead to a parting of the ways. ✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Help outsiders but, if you plan to give a cash donation, research the group first. You will be tempted to try to impress someone by being generous and that isn't likely to do the trick. You have plenty to offer instead of cash. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Talk to people who can help you move in a better direction. You don't have to go it alone—ask for help. A change in your status is apparent and will come about due to a serious partnership you are involved in. ✪✪✪✪

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Take a new look at an old situation. If you are displeased with some of the connections in your life, rid yourself of the deadweight. Avoid traveling or getting into precarious situations that could develop into a shouting match. Stay calm and ride out the storm. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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Birthday Baby: You are a charmer and explorer. You are insightful, practical and quick to respond. You are ahead of your time—a real trendsetter.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	7		2		8			4
5								
					4	2		
9				2		4		7
			6	3	9			
6		5		8				1
		4	7					
								2
2			3		1		9	

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 1/05

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

2	6	9	8	5	1	3	7	4
7	5	3	4	6	2	8	9	1
4	8	1	9	7	3	2	6	5
8	4	2	1	9	5	6	3	7
5	3	6	7	2	4	1	8	9
1	9	7	6	3	8	4	5	2
6	1	5	3	4	7	9	2	8
9	7	4	2	8	6	5	1	3
3	2	8	5	1	9	7	4	6

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 1/04

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

PHOTOCOPY THIS! **Solution: 6 letters**

T	I	S	K	R	A	M	E	R	S	S	P	I	L	S
A	N	S	W	E	R	S	G	U	E	S	O	A	E	T
C	V	E	S	I	D	E	A	S	S	P	A	M	G	N
C	O	M	M	E	N	T	S	P	T	S	A	L	E	E
O	I	H	A	N	D	E	S	E	C	N	I	P	C	M
U	C	(D)	L	F	G	C	E	E	A	R	T	N	B	E
N	E	I	(L)	E	H	I	M	C	F	R	E	A	Y	L
T	A	Y	G	(O)	K	T	S	H	O	D	C	B	R	P
M	E	I	O	F	(F)	O	E	S	I	K	I	H	A	P
R	V	L	L	F	R	N	J	V	A	L	F	D	R	U
E	C	D	A	E	O	O	E	E	L	I	F	O	B	S
S	R	E	T	R	N	L	I	S	T	S	O	U	I	K
U	D	D	A	R	T	X	E	S	A	F	E	B	L	R
M	P	I	C	T	U	R	E	S	T	A	P	L	E	O
E	E	S	N	E	C	I	L	T	R	O	P	E	R	W

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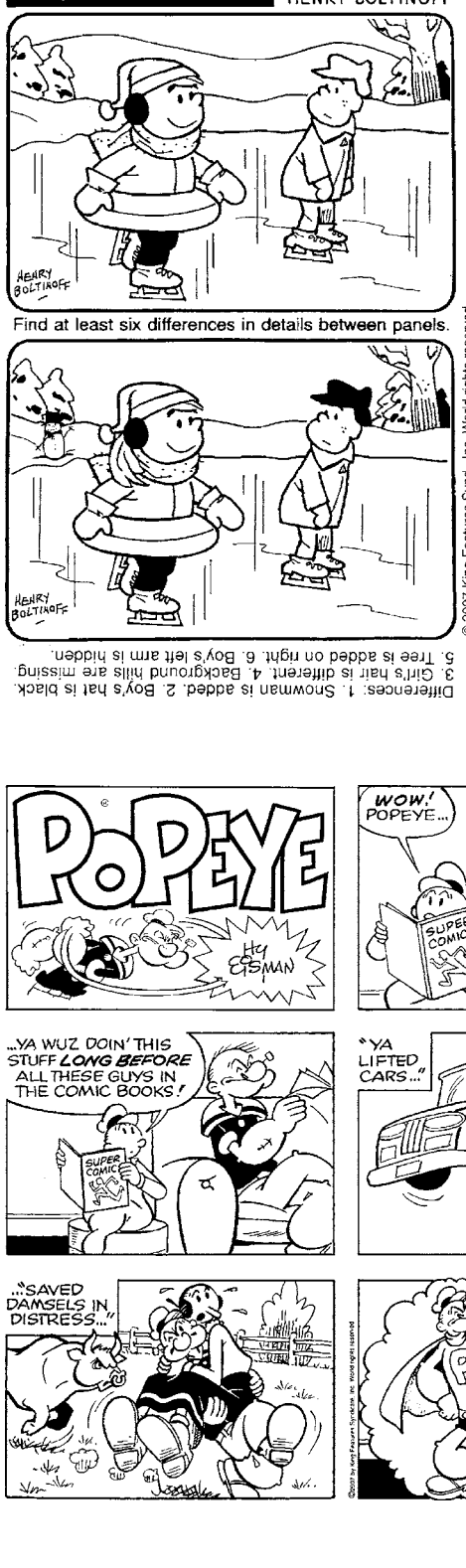
Account, Answers, Assignment, Back, Bills, Catalog, Class, Comments, Double, Evidence, Extra, Facts, File, Flyer, Fold, Front, Give, Hand, Ideas, Invoice, Issue, Joke, Library, License, Lists, Mail, Memo, Message, Names, Notice, Offer, Office, Page, Paper, Pictures, Remarks, Report, Research, Resume, Safe, School, Sided, Slips, Small, Sort, Speech, Staple, Supplement, Work

Yesterday's Answer: Procedure

We listened to your requests! **TREASURY #6** is the first-ever Wonderword book containing only 20 x 20 puzzles, with 75 of these large puzzles. To order, send check or money order for $10.95 each plus $3.25 p&h ($14.20 total each. U.S. funds only for the first volume, $1.50 p&h for each additional volume, to Wonderword, Universal Press Syndicate, 4520 Main St., Kansas City, Mo. 64111 or call toll-free 1-800-255-6734, ext. 6688. Order online at upuzzles.com.

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

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Differences: 1. Snowman is added. 2. Boy's hat is black. 3. Girl's hair is different. 4. Background hills are missing. 5. Tree is added on right. 6. Boy's left arm is hidden.

Wishing Well®

3	4	6	7	6	5	3	5	7	4	3	8	4
Y	N	C	S	O	M	O	A	T	E	U	B	W
7	4	2	6	2	4	6	3	6	3	2	5	6
E	A	F	N	A	C	Q	L	U	O	M	K	E
7	5	7	4	5	3	8	6	5	2	6	5	4
P	E	C	Q	S	O	E	S	O	I	T	M	U
5	6	4	7	4	7	8	5	3	6	8	4	6
E	M	A	A	I	R	H	O	K	A	E	N	D
2	5	4	5	3	6	7	5	2	8	2	5	3
L	N	T	E	Y	E	E	G	Y	L	V	L	O
5	7	3	2	4	7	4	3	5	2	4	8	2
A	F	U	I	A	U	N	R	D	S	C	P	I
7	8	4	7	8	3	7	3	2	3	2	3	8
L	F	E	L	U	B	Y	E	T	S	S	T	L

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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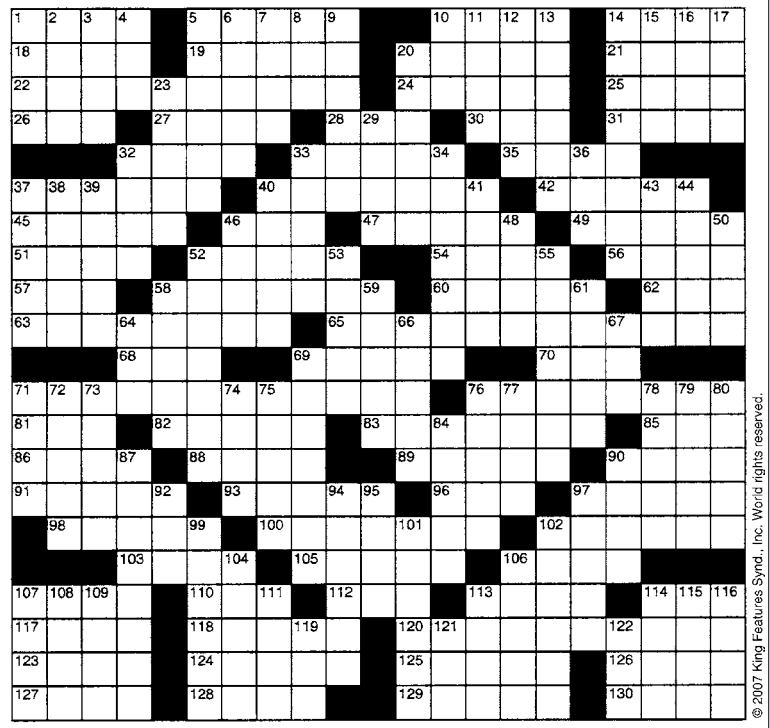
Super Crossword — IN REVERSE

ACROSS
1 Israel's Barak
5 "Fie!"
10 Traffic sound
14 Beer ingredient
18 It's nothing
19 "From the Terrace" author
20 Fusillade
21 Not quite closed
22 KINGLY BREW
24 Start
25 Actor Andrews
26 Parrot
27 Charity
28 Party animal?
30 Formicary denizen
31 Final
32 Loose
33 Like opposites
35 Pitch
37 Dump on
40 Can opener
42 Harp part
45 Crop up
46 Part of EEC
47 Golden —
49 Merchandise
51 Navel store?
52 Disseminate
54 Flat hats
56 Relocate
57 Rock's — Zeppelin
58 Ubiquitous songbird
60 Faultless
62 Clarke or Questel
63 HURT FRIENDS
65 "GIDDYUP!" OR "HOOCHIE MAMA!"
68 Fumble
69 Net type
70 "Jurassic Park" stuff
71 RODMAN FELL FROM GRACE
76 ENTHUSIASTIC SINGER
81 Japanese statesman
82 Category
83 Gets back
85 Relative of un-
86 Sporting saddles
88 Autumn implement
89 Distribute the donuts
90 Word with camp or tree
91 Artist Rousseau
93 Intrinsically
96 Mauna —
97 "Greetings!"
98 Find out
100 Did business
102 He had a lot of Gaul
103 Angler's danglers
105 Fear
106 "You — Hurry Love" ('66 hit)
107 Society
110 Sweater letter
112 Gumshoe
113 Toil
114 August one
117 "Damn Yankees" siren
118 Electronic device
120 SWEATERS ARE OFFENSIVE
123 "Kismet" character
124 — fell swoop
125 Government game
126 Where to find a zebu
127 Man the bar
128 Dweeb
129 Producer Coen
130 Chatterley or Windermere

DOWN
1 Biblical book
2 Dickens villain
3 Prod
4 '50 film noir classic
5 It's on the bee's knees
6 "It's a —" ('70 song)
7 Witches
8 Live and breathe
9 Pop Art pioneer
10 Outlaw
11 Lohengrin's love
12 Happening
13 KETTLE COVER
14 PRODUCED CHEESE
15 Trojan War hero
16 Turner or Wood
17 Soho streetcar
20 Beethoven creation
23 Sweatshirt size
29 Parisian pronoun
32 '78 Stallone flick
33 More theoretical
34 Doctorow novel
36 Fresh
37 Shopping sites
38 Historian Durant
39 Hunt or Hamilton
40 Acts catty?
41 Blender part
43 Fragrance
44 Actor Burton
46 And more of the same
48 Part of ER
50 Go after
52 Less plentiful
53 Roused
55 Food fish
58 Bit of parsley
59 More ironic
61 — a hand (aids)
64 Grunter's grounds
66 Llama turf
67 Deranged
69 Looked like Hook?
71 Word with side or satellite
72 Lucy's landlady
73 Peter of Herman's Hermits
74 Cinch
75 Vexed
76 Hitter Hank
77 "— Las Vegas" ('64 film)
78 Baal and Elvis
79 Stringed instrument
80 Philanthropist Brooke
84 Very cold
87 BORING POET
90 Exemplar of redness
92 Private pension
94 French philosopher
95 Gen. Robt. —
97 "Big" star
99 SWIPE BROOCH
101 Undertake
102 "The Silent Spring" author
104 Macbeth, for one
106 Terra —
107 Thicken
108 Capital of Togo
109 — Bator
111 Borodin's "Prince —"
113 Using
114 Hartman or Kudrow
115 Geraint's lady
116 Adequate
119 Purpose
121 "— again!"
122 Chess champion Mikhail



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Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

1. ASTRONOMY: How many major stars make up the Big Dipper?
2. GEOGRAPHY: The tiny country of Djibouti lies on which continent?
3. POLITICS: Which leader of a foreign government has the nickname "El Jefe Maximo"?
4. BUSINESS: What company produced the Frisbee?
5. INVENTIONS: When was the transistor invented?
6. LITERATURE: What was the name of the attorney introduced in a series of books by Erle Stanley Gardner?
7. MEDICAL: What is the medical name of the condition called "shingles"?
8. U.S. STATES: What is Wyoming's nickname?
9. MEASUREMENTS: What is the closest metric equivalent to an acre?
10. MOVIES: What actor provided the voice of Woody in the animated film "Toy Story"?

Answers

1. Seven
2. Africa
3. Fidel Castro
4. Wham-O
5. 1947, Bell Telephone Laboratories
6. Perry Mason
7. Herpes zoster
8. Equality State
9. Hectare
10. Tom Hanks

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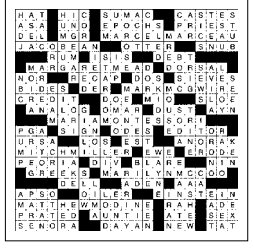
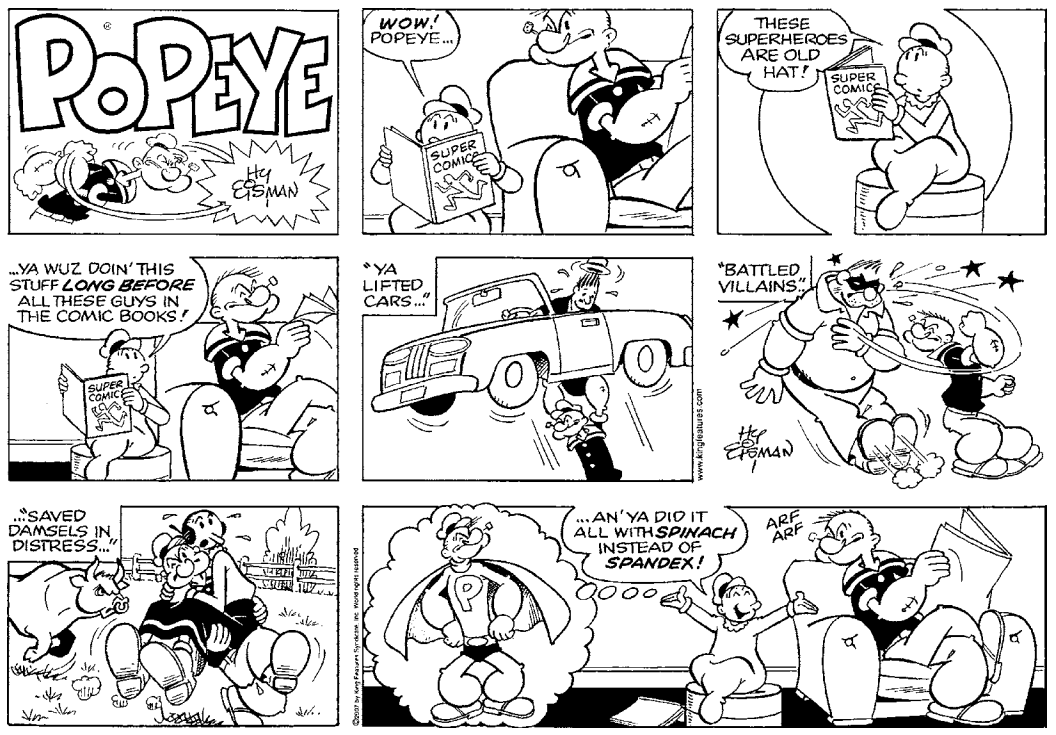
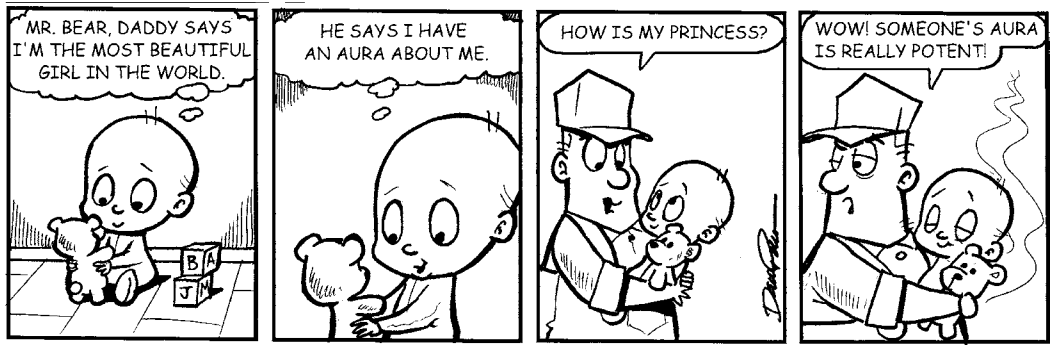
Saturday's Answers

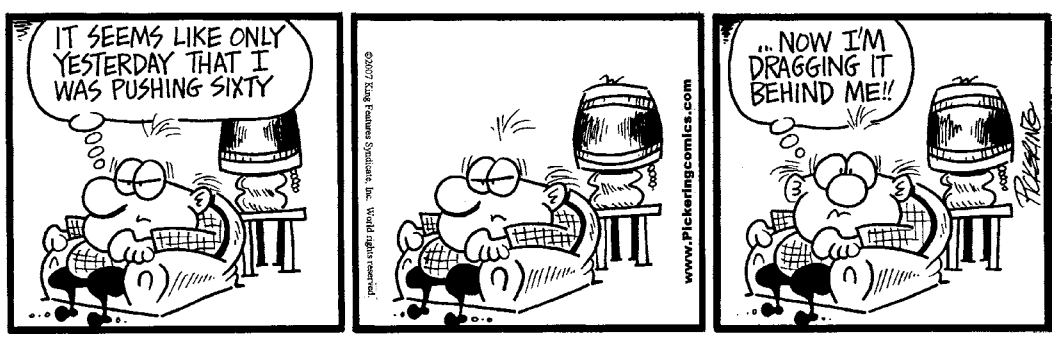




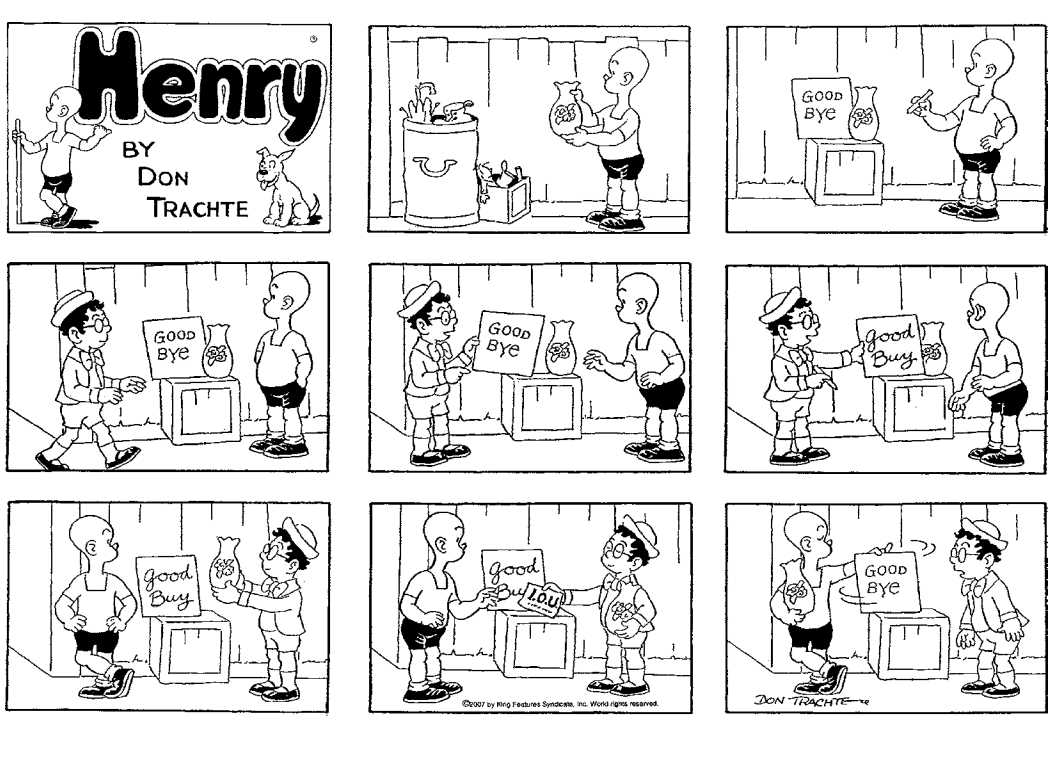
Amber Waves — by Dave T. Phipps


MR. BEAR, DADDY SAYS I'M THE MOST BEAUTIFUL GIRL IN THE WORLD.
HE SAYS I HAVE AN AURA ABOUT ME.
HOW IS MY PRINCESS?
WOW! SOMEONE'S AURA IS REALLY POTENT!

The Spats — by Jeff Pickering



MARK TRAIL
DON'T FORGET OUR FEATHERED FRIENDS THIS TIME OF YEAR WHEN HEAVY SNOWS SEAL OFF MUCH OF THEIR FOOD SOURCE!
ONCE YOU START PUTTING OUT FEED FOR THEM, KEEP IT UP, AS THE LITTLE CREATURES QUICKLY BECOME DEPENDENT!
MARK, HOW DO BIRDS KEEP THEIR LEGS AND FEET FROM FREEZING?
WHILE THE FEATHERED BODY MAY BE KEPT ABOVE 100°, THE UNPROTECTED LEGS MAY GET ONLY A TRICKLE OF BLOOD...
BARELY KEEPING THE TEMPERATURE ABOVE THE FREEZING POINT
WILD BIRDS HAVE INTERNAL REGULATION SYSTEMS TO DISTRIBUTE THE FLOW OF BLOOD
BIRDS NEED PLENTY OF FOOD, WHICH CAN BE TURNED INTO BODY HEAT TO HELP THEM SURVIVE THE COLD
JACK ELROD
MAKE ONE OF YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS TO BE KIND TO OUR ANIMAL FRIENDS IN NEED



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2 br apartment w/ laundry facility. Beach Rd., Chalan Laulau. Behind former Hakubotan bldg. Close to beach walking path. Call 483-1974.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

2 COOK (ST 7200)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation provided by employer. Contact: Ming Dynasty Investment Corp. dba Ming Palace Chinese Restaurant @234-1005.

---

1 BUILDING MAINTENANCE REPAIRER (ST 7201)
Salary:$3.55-$4.00/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation by employer; free housing; transportation is self provided; employee to provide own food & medical at 80% by employer and 20% by the employee. Contact: Quad L's Company dba Lifoifoi Building @322-6183.

---

1 BUILDING MAINTENANCE REPAIR (ST 7202)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Housing provided; food provided; workmen's compensation & medical. Contact: John M. Tagabuel @288-6746.

---

1 HOUSEWORKER (ST 7203)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; employee provided food & medical expense provided by employer. Contact: Cecil Dela Cruz dba Private @235-4626.

---

2 CARPENTER (ST 7204)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Employee provided housing; employee provided food; medical & workman compensation employer provided. Contact: Pacific Drilling Ltd. @235-8531.

---

1 SHOP BEAUTY MANAGER (ST 7205)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; workmen's compensation; medical expense & self arranged transportation. Contact: Emilita G. Bacani dba Salon De Fleur @233-3317.

---

3 WAITRESS/WAITER (ST 7206)
Salary:$3.55-$4.25/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; employer provided meals; medical insurance & workers compensation. Contact: Inter Pacific Resorts Corp. dba Pacific Islands Club-Saipan @234-7976.

4 WAITRESS/WAITER (ST 7207)
Salary:$4.25-$5.25/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; employer provided meals; medical insurance & workers compensation. Contact: Inter Pacific Resorts Corp. dba Pacific Islands Club-Saipan @234-7976.

3 HOUSEKEEPING CLEANER (ST 7208)
Salary:$3.55-$4.00/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; employer provided meals; medical insurance & workers compensation. Contact: Inter Pacific Resorts Corp. dba Pacific Islands Club-Saipan @234-7976.

1 GUEST SERVICE AGENT (BELLHOP) (ST 7209)
Salary:$3.55-$4.65/hour. Benefits: (01) Self arranged housing; employer provided meals; medical insurance & workers compensation. Contact: Inter Pacific Resorts Corp. dba Pacific Islands Club-Saipan @234-7976.

1 SYSTEM (ADMINISTRATOR) ANALYST (ST 7210)
Salary:$27,000.00-$28,000.00/annual. Benefits: (01) Self arranged housing; employer provided meals; medical insurance & workers compensation. Contact: Inter Pacific Resorts Corp. dba Pacific Islands Club-Saipan @234-7976.

2 STEWARD (ST 7211)
Salary:$3.55-$4.25/hour. Benefits: (01) Self arranged housing; (01) employer provided meals; medical insurance & workers compensation. Contact: Inter Pacific Resorts Corp. dba Pacific Islands Club-Saipan @234-7976.

2 COOK (ST 7212)
Salary:$3.55-$4.25/hour. Benefits: (2) Self arranged housing; employer provided meals; medical insurance & workers compensation. Contact: Inter Pacific Resorts Corp. dba Pacific Islands Club-Saipan @234-7976.

3 COOK (ST 7213)
Salary:$4.25-$5.00/hour. Benefits: (2) Self arranged housing; (1) employer provided meals; medical insurance & workers compensation. Contact: Inter Pacific Resorts Corp. dba Pacific Islands Club-Saipan @234-7976.

1 POWERHOUSE MECHANIC (ST 7214)
Salary:$3.55-$4.25/hour. Benefits: (1) Self arranged housing; employer provided meals; medical insurance & workers compensation. Contact: Inter Pacific Resorts Corp. dba Pacific Islands Club-Saipan @234-7976.

1 PASTRY (SUPERVISOR) COOK (ST 7215)
Salary:$5.00-$6.00/hour. Benefits: (1) Self arranged housing; employer provided meals; medical insurance & workers compensation. Contact: Inter Pacific Resorts Corp. dba Pacific Islands Club-Saipan @234-7976.

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1 BUILDING MAINTENANCE (ST 7216)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange (EE provided) housing; employee provided food; the workmen's compensation insurance is employer provided & medical expenses are reimbursable (employer provided). Contact: Vicente M. Sablan dba Sablan & Sons Ent., @235-1105.

1 MAINTENANCE MECHANIC (ST 7217)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange (EE provided) housing; employee provided food; the workmen's compensation insurance is employer provided & medical expenses are reimbursable (employer provided). Contact: Vicente M. Sablan dba Sablan & Sons Ent., @235-1105.

---

1 STORE MANAGER (ST 7218)
Salary:$800.00/monthly. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided food & workmen's compensation. Contact: TKB Entertainment Inc. @235-8366.

WHATZIT Solution:
Sign on the dotted line

---

1 (PRE-PRESS) MANAGER (ST 7219)
Salary:$1,000.00/monthly. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; surety bond; medical & worksmen compensation. Contact: ASG Corporation dba Elite Printing @288-6465.

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1 GENERAL MANAGER (ST 7220)
Salary:$1,800.00-$2,000.00/monthly. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: Eaulands CNMI Inc. @322-0018.

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1 DRESSMAKER (ST 7221)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical. Contact: Elvira A. Ogo @233-6927.

1 BEAUTICIAN (ST 7222)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical. Contact: Elvira A. Ogo @233-6927.

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1 BUILDING MAINTENANCE/ REPAIRER (ST 7224)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Health insurance & workers compensation. Contact: Phillip A. Fejeran dba J&J Tire Shop @898-0309.

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1 SUPERVISOR (ST 7225)
Salary:$1,700.00/monthly. Benefits: Self arranged housing; employee provided food; employer provided workers compensation & medical insurance & self arranged transportation to & from jobsite. Contact: Bisness Mami Saipan Inc. dba Mid Pac Micronesia @234-0475.

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1 MAINTENANCE BLDG. REPAIRER (ST 7226)
Salary:$3.55-$4.60/hour. Benefits: Free housing; self provided food; medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Vestcor Real Estate, Ltd. @322-3797.

1 MAINTENANCE BLDG. REPAIRER (ST 7227)
Salary:$3.55-$4.35/hour. Benefits: Free housing; self provided food; medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Vestcor Real Estate, Ltd. @322-3797.

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TRIPLE J

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QUALIFICATIONS/DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

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Director of Human Resources
Fax: **(670) 234-7347** *Email:* **hrdirector@triplejsaipan.com**

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Find today's solution in this section

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

ADS (7DAYS)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$25
• 5-Liner	$35
• 3-Liner with picture	$45
• 5-Liner with picture	$55

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As added service to our valued customers, you may now submit all your JVA placements for announcement/publication in *Saipan Tribune's* print and online edition and KZMI/KCNM at the same time. No more worries of having to go to two different locations every time you need to place job vacancy announcements. Special rates are available for JVA customers under this arrangement.

Print*	
• 1st position	$10
• 2nd position	$3
• Succeeding positions	$1

LOWER RATES! Effective Feb. 3, 2007

Combo (Print and Online)*	
• 1st position	$13
• 2nd position	$4
• Succeeding positions	$2

Radio (KCNM/KZMI)	
• Up to 6 positions	$5
• More than 6 positions	$10

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Saturday And Sunday Issues:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on either Sunday or Monday issues.

- KCNM/KZMI: All ads placed on Friday (9am to 5pm) will be for Monday's radio announcement.

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Job Vacancy Announcements

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

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All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

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Salary:$1,000.00-$1,700.00/monthly. Benefits: Free housing; self provided food; medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Vestcor Real Estate, Ltd. @322-3797.

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3 COOK (ST 7229)
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1 DATA ENTRY CLERK (ST 7230)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Free housing; free food & workers compensation. Contact: Tinian Real Estate Investment LLC @433-2274.

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1 CARPENTER (ST 7231)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Free housing; own provided food; free power & water; insurance; WWC & provided transportation from barracks to jobsite. Contact: Fausto V. Supnet dba Supnet House Rental @433-0004.

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1 HOUSEWORKER (ST 7232)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Free housing & free food. Contact: Eric A. Borja @433-2593/285-2234.

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1 FARMER (ST 7233)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: CNMI tax. Contact: Martin DLC. Atalig @433-2577.

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1 ELECTRICAL ENGINEER (ST 7234)
Salary:$9.00-$12.00/hour. Benefits: Free housing. Contact: Ricardo T. Guerrero dba Western Pacific Electric (MIC) Inc. @287-2436/433-2108.

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1 ASSISTANT MANAGER (ST 7235)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: By self housing; by self food; CNMI tax & workers compensation. Contact: ML Investment Inc. dba Sun Plaza Gift Shop @433-8866.

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1 FARMER (ST 7236)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Free housing; free food & workman compensation. Contact: Ignacio K Quichocho @433-3565.

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1 CARPENTER (ST 7237)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided food; workman compensation & medical. Contact: Three Way Int'l Inc. @433-0004.

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1 (BAKERY) MANAGER (ST 7238)
Salary:$1,800.00/monthly. Benefits: Self provided housing; one meal free; medical & worksmens compensation. Contact: Islands Supply Int'l Inc. @234-0828.

2 ASST. MANAGER (ST 7239)
Salary:$1,500.00/monthly. Benefits: Self provided housing; one meal free; medical & worksmens compensation. Contact: Islands Supply Int'l Inc. @234-0828.

3 COOK (ST 7240)
Salary:$3.55-$4.00/hour. Benefits: $50.00/housing allowance; one meal free; medical & worksmens compensation. Contact: Islands Supply Int'l Inc. @234-0828.

3 KITCHEN HELPER/FOOD PREPARER (ST 7241)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $50.00/housing allowance; one meal free; medical & worksmens compensation. Contact: Islands Supply Int'l Inc. @234-0828.

2 ACCOUNTANT (CASHIER) (ST 7242)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $50.00/housing allowance; one meal free; medical & worksmens compensation. Contact: Islands Supply Int'l Inc. @234-0828.

1 BAKER (ST 7243)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $50.00/housing allowance; one meal free; medical & worksmens compensation. Contact: Islands Supply Int'l Inc. @234-0828.

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1 SALES REPRESENTATIVE (ST 7244)
Salary:$4.00/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical; surety bond & worksmen compensation. Contact: ASG Corporation dba Elite Printing @288-6465.

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1 (HOUSEWORKER) LIVE-IN-MAID (ST 7245)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $100.00/housing; $100.00/food; medical & transportation provided by employer. Contact: Diego B. Songsong @322-6236.

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1 WAREHOUSE WORKER (ST 7246)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; provided own food; workmen compensation & medical covered. Contact: Foremost Foods Saipan dba Icekiss Inc. @235-2653.

1 ACCOUNTANT (ST 7247)
Salary:$4.00-$5.00/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; provided own food; workmen compensation & medical covered. Contact: Foremost Foods Saipan dba Icekiss Inc. @235-2653.

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1 ADMIN. ASSISTANT (ST 7248)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provide food; medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: EQ Construction Corp. @234-8827.

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1 FARMER (ST 7249)
Salary:$3.05/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Felipe A. Roberto @235-1476.

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24 INSTRUCTORS (POST SECONDARY) (ST 7250)
Salary:$1,800.00-$2,000.00/monthly. Benefits: $300.00/per month housing; $5.00/per meal; free medical insurance & workers compensation insurance. Contact: American Mediscience University @288-2121.

1 ADMINISTRATOR (POST SECONDARY) (ST 7251)
Salary:$1,800.00-$2,000.00/monthly. Benefits: $300.00/per month housing; $5.00/per meal; free medical insurance & workers compensation insurance. Contact: American Mediscience University @288-2121.

1 ACCOUNTANT (ST 7252)
Salary:$1,500.00-$2,000.00/monthly. Benefits: $300.00/per month housing; $5.00/per meal; free medical insurance & workers compensation insurance. Contact: American Mediscience University @288-2121.

1 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (ST 7253)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; $5.00/per meal; medical insurance & workers compensation insurance. Contact: American Mediscience University @288-2121.

1 COOK (ST 7254)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Free housing; $5.00/per meal; medical insurance & workers compensation. Contact: American Mediscience University @288-2121.

2 SECURITY GUARD (ST 7255)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Free housing; $5.00/per meal; medical insurance & workers compensation. Contact: American Mediscience University @288-2121.

1 AUTO MECHANIC (ST 7256)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Golden Key Saipan, Inc. dba Rajamsbelle Auto Shop @235-8656.

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1 HOUSEWORKER (ST 7257)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Housing live-in; ER provided food& medical. Contact: Ana C. Celis @288-2622.

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1 BLDG. MAINTENANCE REPAIRER (ST 7258)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Golden Crown Corp. dba GCC Carpet & Floor Care @235-3936.

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1 (ASSISTANT) MANAGER (ST 7259)
Salary:$3.55-$4.00/hour. Benefits: Medical insurance & workers compensation. Contact: Luen Fung Ent., (Saipan), Inc. @234-7243.

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2 WAITRESS/WAITER (ST 7260)
Salary:$3.05/hour. Benefits: Medical benefits & workers compensation. Contact: Sheu's Brothers Holding Co., Ltd. @235-6128.

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1 HOUSEWORKER (ST 7261)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical benefits & workers compensation. Contact: Catherine Sablan @235-1701.

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1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (ST 7262)
Salary:$3.05/hour. Benefits: Medical benefits & workers compensation. Contact: Nenita V. Marquez @234-3647.

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1 FARM WORKER (ST 7263)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical benefits & workers compensation. Contact: Jesus T. Guerrero @234-8404.

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1 HOUSEWORKER (ST 7264)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $100.00/housing deductible by employer; $100.00/food deductible by employer; medical benefits & workers compensation. Contact: Jose T. Chong @256-5673.

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1 SALES REPRESENTATIVE (ST 7265)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical. Contact: Suxin Guo Edboy-John Fishing @285-9681.

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1 AUTO BODY REPAIRER (ST 7266)
Salary:$3.55-$4.00/hour. Benefits: Work compensation & medical insurance. Contact: Cargo Express (Saipan), Inc. @234-6616/7/8.

1 HAND PACKER (ST 7267)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Work compensation & medical insurance. Contact: Cargo Express (Saipan), Inc. @234-6616/7/8.

1 SHIPPING & RECEIVING CLERK (ST 7268)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Work compensation & medical insurance. Contact: Cargo Express (Saipan), Inc. @234-6616/7/8.

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1 MAINTENANCE MECHANIC (ST 7269)
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235-NEWS

Clemens: Injections were lidocaine, B-12

NEW YORK (AP)—Roger Clemens said former trainer Brian McNamee injected him with the painkiller lidocaine and the vitamin B-12—not any performance-enhancing drugs.

In the first excerpts released from the pitcher's interview with CBS's "60 Minutes," which is to be broadcast Sunday night, Clemens maintained the denials he has issued since McNamee implicated him in the Mitchell report on doping in baseball, which was released Dec. 13.

McNamee, a former strength coach for the Blue Jays and Yankees, told Mitchell he personally injected Clemens with steroids in 1998 while they were with Toronto, and with steroids and human growth hormone in 2000 and 2001 while with New York.

"Roger took bunches of his shots over his career, much the way racehorses do, unfortunately," Clemens' lawyer, Rusty Hardin, said after the excepts were released Thursday.

Clemens issued a video statement on Dec. 23 denying McNamee's accusations and plans to hold a news conference Monday. Clemens did not mention injections of painkillers or vitamins.

"That short statement didn't go into any details and simply told the public at large he did not take steroids or any other performance-enhancing drugs. That's never been a contention of his," Hardin said.

"The reason he hasn't stepped out personally before now was really our decision, not his, and that was to more deliberately look into how in the world the Mitchell report could have reached what we believe was this totally wrong conclusion before we started talking out. Now we're more comfortable with all of that, and he's going to answer whatever questions they have."

During the CBS interview, recorded last Friday at Clemens' home in Katy, Texas, Clemens was asked whether McNamee had injected him with any drugs.

AP

In this image captured from video and released by CBS News on Thursday, Jan. 8, 2008, baseball player Roger Clemens is seen at his Katy, Texas home, on Friday, Dec. 28, 2007, while giving his first interview since being accused of using performance-enhancing drugs by his former trainer in the Mitchell Report. The interview will air on CBS's "60 Minutes," on Sunday, Jan. 6, 2007.

"Lidocaine and B-12," Clemens responded. "It's for my joints, and B-12 I still take today."

Lidocaine is a local anesthetic that can be used by dentists and in minor surgery. It also is available as part of ointments used to treat skin inflammation.

Clemens told CBS that McNamee's accusation was "ridiculous" and said he "never" used banned substances.

"Swear?" CBS's Mike Wallace asked Clemens.

"Swear," Clemens responded.

Baseball players and owners did not have an agreement to ban steroids until September 2002, and they didn't ban HGH until January 2005.

The Mitchell report states McNamee injected Clemens with substances provided by the pitcher or that McNamee obtained from former Mets clubhouse attendant Kirk Radomski. In his video statement, Clemens said: "I did not provide Brian McNamee with any drugs to inject into my body. Brian McNamee did not inject steroids or human growth hormones into my body."

McNamee's lawyer, Richard Emery, has threatened to sue the seven-time Cy Young Award winner for defamation.

"I think that this is a lawyers' game, which allows him to try and attempt to say that McNamee didn't know what he was injecting or that at least Clemens didn't know what he was injecting," Emery said.

"It really depends now on how the whole interview goes, and whether he goes after Brian. Look, I don't care whether Clemens used Sodium Pentothal. I don't care if he used strontium 90. My only concern is for Brian's well-being and his future."

Emery said a decision whether to sue won't be made until after the "60 Minutes" interview is broadcast.

"It really depends on what a reasonable person would take away from the entire interview as to whether he's going to damage Brian. And we can't tell until what we see happens on Sunday," Emery said. "But it is fascinating. I think that Hardin and Clemens are responding to the fact that McNamee is going to defend himself aggressively by them trying to parse this closely and issue this statement through CBS. So it's fascinating, and I'm glad to see that they are responding to Brian's notice to them that he is not going to be trashed by them."

When Baltimore's Rafael Palmeiro tested positive for steroids in 2005 and was suspended for 10 days, he said a tainted vial of B-12 given to him by a teammate—later identified as Miguel Tejada—might have caused the doping violation.

Emery wouldn't say whether McNamee did inject Clemens with lidocaine and B-12.

"That's much too specific. That evidence has yet to be developed," he said. "There is a ton of evidence that the Mitchell report failed to explore that will corroborate Brian, and so it would be foolhardy for Clemens or Hardin to allow Clemens to trash Brian."

Emery said it was unlikely McNamee would sue CBS. He also hasn't decided whether a suit would be filed in New York state court or federal court.

"Either court in New York would be perfectly acceptable," he said. "No New York jury is going to be hoodwinked by this claim if he ends up defaming Brian."

Mets first baseman Carlos Delgado, a teammate of Clemens on the 1998 Blue Jays, said the pitcher and strength coach didn't appear to be close at the time.

"It wasn't anything more than the usual pitcher and conditioning relationship," he said.

Delgado did find fault with Mitchell's report.

"There's a lot of accusations with not enough evidence," he said.

Jayhawks' D stuns Hokies in Orange Bowl

MIAMI (AP)—The surprising Kansas Jayhawks achieved the unexpected again Thursday—they won the Orange Bowl with defense. While their high-powered offense was stymied most of the night, the Jayhawks came up with three interceptions and beat Virginia Tech 24-21 in the Orange Bowl to cap one of the finest seasons in school history.

The turnovers led to 17 Kansas points, including Aqib Talib's 60-yard return for the game's first score. He was chosen the game's most valuable player.

"Everybody talks about Virginia Tech's defense," said safety Justin Thornton, who also had an interception. "We came out to show we can play defense at Kansas, too."

No. 8 Kansas (12-1), perhaps the biggest surprise in college football this season, won in its first Bowl Championship Series game to set a team record for victories. A year ago the Jayhawks went 6-6.

"People kept telling us we couldn't win against this team, that we couldn't win the big game, that we had no chance," quarterback Todd Reesing said. "We took that to heart. We like being underdogs."

The No. 5 Hokies (11-3) lost their fourth consecutive BCS game. It was a bittersweet finish for the Hokies, who revived campus spirits this season following the April 16 massacre that left 33 students and professors dead.

"I think we still accomplished something this season," tackle Duane Brown said. "We couldn't finish off on a high note."

The Jayhawks played in their first major bowl since the 1969 Orange Bowl, and they made a big splash at the start, racing to a 17-0 lead after 23 minutes.

Virginia Tech closed the deficit to 17-14 before Sean Glennon was intercepted by Thornton, whose 30-yard return gave Kansas the ball at the 2 with 11 minutes left. Reesing scored on the next play.

Chris Harris also had an interception to set up a field goal, and the Jayhawks totaled five sacks while allowing only two scoring drives.

Virginia Tech drove 78 yards to score with 3 minutes left on Glennon's 20-yard pass to Justin Harper. The Jayhawks' Raimond Pendleton fielded the ensuing onside kick, and they ran out the clock.

"It feels really great," Kansas tackle Anthony Collins said. "Now I feel like USC and Florida and them feel every day. They don't get any better than this. I know it ain't the national championship, but it doesn't get any better. We won the Orange Bowl."

Virginia Tech's biggest gain came on special teams. Harper scored on an 84-yard punt return after taking a lateral on a reverse from Eddie Royal, who fielded the kick.

Otherwise, Kansas' special teams played well. Joe Mortensen blocked a 25-yard field-goal attempt to preserve a 17-14 Kansas lead. The Jayhawks pulled off a fake punt to keep one drive going, and Kyle Tucker's booming punts kept the Hokies pinned deep.

"We were supposed to be outclassed on special teams, and I think we held our own," Kansas coach Mark Mangino said.

The game was among the chilliest Orange Bowls ever, with a temperature of 57 degrees at kickoff and winds gusting at up to 25 mph.

The Jayhawks were the nation's highest-scoring offense this season at 44 points per game, and they took a wide-open approach in the first series. Once they lined up with both tackles flanked wide alongside the receivers, and on another play Reesing threw a left-handed shovel pass for a 9-yard gain.

Kansas split a tackle wide again when Reesing completed a pass to convert a fourth-and-1 situation, which led to a touchdown for a 17-0 lead. Reesing hit Marcus Henry with a 13-yard pass for the score, capping a 59-yard drive.

But that was the Jayhawks' lone scoring drive of more than 17 yards, leaving most of the big plays to their defense. The biggest was by Talib, who stepped in front of the intended receiver to intercept freshman Tyrod Taylor and ran along the Virginia Tech sideline untouched for a touchdown.

It was the first interception return for a touchdown in the Orange Bowl since 1968.

Virginia Tech came into the game with the more heralded defense, but the Jayhawks had four sacks in the first quarter. They threw Taylor for losses of 11 and 8 yards on his first two plays as part of the Hokies quarterback rotation.

On Virginia Tech's next possession, Josh Morgan dropped a potential touchdown pass, and Jud Dunlevy missed a 47-yard field goal attempt.

Virginia Tech mounted a 68-yard drive late in the first half, and Branden Ore scored on a 1-yard run to cut the deficit to 17-7. Ore was suspended for the first quarter for being late to a practice but still finished with 116 yards rushing.

Warren Sapp tells Raiders he's retiring

ALAMEDA, Calif. (AP)—Warren Sapp announced his retirement on Thursday, ending the career of one of the best defensive tackles to play in the NFL.

Sapp posted a two-word message on his Web site, http://www.qbkilla.com , announcing his intention: "I'M DONE!" He had told teammates and coaches his plans after the season finale Sunday against San Diego. Sapp told the Contra Costa Times earlier Thursday that he had called Raiders owner Al Davis to give him the official news.

Sapp, 35, was the quintessential "three technique" tackle during his 13-year career, lining up between the guard and tackle and splitting that gap. Few did it better than Sapp, who made seven Pro Bowls, won The Associated Press Defensive Player of the Year award in 1999, and was a key cog in Tampa Bay's Super Bowl winning defense in the 2002 season.

"Every defensive tackle that's drafted in the top five is supposed to be the next (me)," Sapp said earlier this season. "All of them have that tag. ... I've played the game pretty well, so if I'm the standard by which (they'll) be judged, that's tough, because I'd like to relive that guy, too. He's a bad boy. He's dead now. I give you flashes of him every now and then but, nah, that guy was sick."

After having 10 sacks in 2006, Sapp wasn't as successful this season when he finished with only two. He also was part of a Raiders defense that struggled against the run, allowing a league-worst 4.8 yards per carry.

Sapp was no longer the every-down menace he was during his younger days in Tampa, but he could still pick his spots. In his final game against San Diego, Sapp shot through a gap and hit quarterback Philip Rivers' forearm before he could hand the ball off to LaDainian Tomlinson, causing a fumble.

"You get a little older, you can see your weaknesses a little bit more and go about 45-50 plays now," Sapp said late in the season. "But there's still some good gas in the tank and I'm still able to make the plays."

Sapp finished his career with 96 1/2 sacks, the 28th most since the NFL began keeping track of the statistic in 1982. What made that even more remarkable is that Sapp played primarily on the inside at tackle, where sacks are traditionally much harder to come by.

AP

Tampa Bay Buccaneers' Warren Sapp celebrates as he leaves the field late in an NFL football game against the Cincinnati Bengals in this Sept. 29, 2002, file photo in Cincinnati.

Sapp was considered a coach on the field by the defensive staff on the Raiders and was viewed as a leader by the young players that surrounded him.

"I felt like having him here made me a better football player," Raiders linebacker Kirk Morrison said. "He was the leader of this defense. They say the middle linebacker is supposed to lead, but the guy has been in the league 13 years and he's seen it all. I leaned on him. There's so much more for me to learn from him I don't want him to leave yet."

Sapp began his career in Tampa Bay in 1995, where he helped turn one of the league's perennial losers into Super Bowl champions following the 2002 season. The Buccaneers had only three winning seasons in 19 years before Sapp arrived.

Along with linebacker Derrick Brooks and safety John Lynch, Sapp was a mainstay on the Bucs defense under coach Tony Dungy. The success they had helped make the "Tampa Two" defense a staple around the league and sent Tampa to the postseason five times in six years from 1997-2002.

Sapp became known as much for his sterling play as he did for his entertaining trash talking on the field.

"I can't stop that," Sapp said. "I'm going to do that as loud as I can for as long as I can because it just gets me going. That's the way I play the game. I can't help it."

Sapp starred in college at the University of Miami, where he arrived as a tight end and left as the best defensive player in the country. He slipped to No. 12 in the 1995 draft after testing positive for marijuana at the scouting combine.

That was just one controversy in Sapp's career. In 2002, he nearly ended the career of Packers offensive tackle Chad Clifton with a vicious hit while trying to throw a block after an interception. Then-Packers coach Mike Sherman confronted Sapp on the field after the game, calling it a dirty play.

Sapp was fined $50,000 for bumping an official in 2003 and was fined $75,000 after being ejected following three personal fouls in the second-to-last game of his career against Jacksonville.

Dolphins fire Cameron after 1-15 season

DAVIE, Fla. (AP)—Unlike his boss, Bill Parcells didn't need to go to Costa Rica. He stayed right at home and decided Cam Cameron had to go, along with just about everyone else on the Miami Dolphins.

A year ago Thursday, Dolphins owner Wayne Huizenga embarked on a two-week coaching search that took him as far as Central America to interview at least a dozen candidates.

Now the Dolphins are starting over.

Cameron was fired Thursday after winning only one game in his first year as an NFL head coach. The move means Miami will have its fifth coach in five seasons.

Such instability has contributed to the Dolphins' decline. This season they lost their first 13 games and finished 1-15, the worst record in franchise history.

Late last month, they brought in Parcells to run the organization. He hired Jeff Ireland as general manager this week, and they fired most of the coaching staff Thursday.

"They were struggling on both sides of the ball," Ireland said. "Looking at it from afar, we've just got to put the right person in place."

Parcells made the decision to fire Cameron in consultation with Ireland, who spent the last seven years in player personnel with the Dallas Cowboys.

Parcells, the Cowboys' coach in 2003-06, may tap the Dallas pipeline again. The early front-runner to replace Cameron is Cowboys assistant head coach Tony Sparano, who is scheduled to interview Friday for the head coaching vacancy in Atlanta.

"Tony's an outstanding coach," Dallas head coach Wade Phillips said this week. "He's got all the attributes, I think, to be a head coach. He works well with people. His players play for him; I think that's important. And he's a really sharp, sharp guy as far as Xs and Os. And I think he'd work well certainly putting a staff together."

All but two members of Cameron's coaching staff were also fired, although some might be rehired by the new head coach, Ireland said. Retained were assistant special teams coach Steve Hoffman and linebackers coach George Edwards.

Cameron was under contract through 2010. A perceived difference in philosophy with the new regime ranked as a bigger factor in his firing than Miami's 1-15 record, Ireland said.

"We just felt in order to move forward and not look back, we needed someone in place who shared the same philosophical compatibilities we shared," Ireland said. "We didn't really know the guy that well. We were going to try to get someone that does share those things, and we weren't completely sold that he did."

Ireland said the philosophy he and Parcells share involves creating a culture of winning. That would be a change for the Dolphins, who missed the playoffs for the sixth consecutive season, extending a franchise record.

"We want strong character around here," said Ireland, who added he'll have final say regarding all player personnel decisions. "The vision of the team will be discipline, passionate players, highly competitive. And we'll be a big team."

Plans for the coaching search were still being formulated, Ireland said.

Nick Watney grabs Mercedes-Benz lead

KAPALUA, Hawaii (AP)—Opening day on the PGA Tour was filled with oddities, starting with Nick Watney leading the Mercedes-Benz Championship on Thursday with a 5-under 68 that featured only one bogey amid a mixture of sunshine and rain.

Newcomers are supposed to be at a disadvantage on the Plantation Course at Kapalua with its mammoth greens and severe grain, but Watney kept it simple and poured in enough putts to take a one-shot lead over Daniel Chopra and get his 2008 season off to a good start.

"I think maybe they say that because the greens are very grainy," Watney said. "I think for me personally with the green, if I don't know what a putt is going to do, then I'll just play grain. So it worked out today."

It didn't work out for most of the winners-only field.

Brandt Snedeker was in the lead most of the round until he hit what he thought was the perfect tee shot on No. 17. Imagine his surprise to see his ball in the waist-high native grasses, some 100 yards behind Steve Stricker. Turns out his driver had a hairline crack in the top of the face, which played a big part in his double bogey-bogey finish that sent him to a 71.

Scott Verplank was at even-par 73, rattled by a ruling he continued to dispute after his round that cost him a double bogey on the 13th and made him think more about his pre-shot routine than how to play the shot.

With his ball positioned on the slope of the fairway, the wind gusting some 30 mph in his face, his ball moved about a quarter-inch. Verplank did not think he had addressed the ball, but after a discussion with rules official Mike Shea, he was told he caused the ball to move. Verplank played a second ball in protest, but lost the argument after his round.

Tour officials were trying to find video evidence after the round.

"I don't agree with it," Verplank said. "I know right from wrong. I know what happened. If I felt I did anything to make that ball move, give me a penalty. At the time, I didn't think I did anything to make it move."

Steve Stricker rallied from a rough start, playing the final 10 holes in 3 under for a 73. But he had a tough time with his new umbrella, which caused his hands to be too slick to grip the club. He wound up grabbing the umbrella by its shaft.

The craziest part of all was the weather.

Sunglasses quickly gave way to umbrellas as a mist sprayed the lower portions of the Plantation Course, and players had a tough time walking into the wind and up the hills. Worse yet, the damp weather continued to make the 7,411-yard course even longer, and it showed. Stephen Ames flushed his driver on the downhill, 550-yard 17th hole (a par 4), then had to hammer a 3-wood to clear the ravine. Paul Goydos had 215 yards left for his third shot on the 676-yard closing hole.

Some vacation this is turning out to be.

Goydos and Boo Weekley were the only players who failed to break 80, although Weekley saw this coming. He hadn't played much golf in the last month and figured he would be closer to shooting 82 and than 72. "I was close," he said as he walked inside to sign for an 80.

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	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	27	3	.900	_
Toronto	17	15	.531	11
New Jersey	15	16	.484	12 1/2
Philadelphia	14	18	.438	14
New York	8	22	.267	19

Southeast Division

Orlando	22	12	.647	_
Atlanta	15	14	.517	4 1/2
Washington	15	15	.500	5
Charlotte	11	19	.367	9
Miami	8	24	.250	13

Central Division

Detroit	25	7	.781	_
Cleveland	15	17	.469	10
Indiana	15	18	.455	10 1/2
Chicago	12	19	.387	12 1/2
Milwaukee	12	19	.387	12 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

San Antonio	21	9	.700	_
Dallas	21	11	.656	1
New Orleans	21	11	.656	1
Houston	15	17	.469	7
Memphis	9	22	.290	12 1/2

Northwest Division

Denver	19	12	.613	_
Portland	20	13	.606	_
Utah	18	16	.529	2 1/2
Seattle	9	23	.281	10 1/2
Minnesota	4	27	.129	15

Pacific Division

Phoenix	23	9	.719	_
L.A. Lakers	19	11	.633	3
Golden State	19	14	.576	4 1/2
Sacramento	12	18	.400	10
L.A. Clippers	10	20	.333	12

Yesterday's Games

Portland 115, Chicago 109, 2OT
Denver 80, San Antonio 77
Phoenix 104, Seattle 96

NBA LEADERS

Scoring

	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
James, Clev.	27	279	194	785	29.1
Bryant, LAL	30	273	215	814	27.1
Iverson, Den.	30	263	236	789	26.3
Anthony, Den.	30	280	187	770	25.7
Wade, Mia.	25	206	207	622	24.9
Jefferson, N.J.	31	240	261	759	24.5
Boozer, Utah	33	333	126	792	24.0
Redd, Mil.	31	236	194	726	23.4
McGrady, Hou.	25	214	105	569	22.8
Howard, Orl.	34	264	240	768	22.6
Butler, Wash.	29	246	118	642	22.1
J. Johnson, Atl.	29	229	129	642	22.1
Davis, G.S.	33	251	151	725	22.0
Nowitzki, Dall.	32	245	183	702	21.9
Stoudemire, Phoe.	28	229	152	611	21.8
Jamison, Wash.	30	241	120	653	21.8
Pierce, Bos.	30	206	178	646	21.5
Carter, N.J.	26	195	126	554	21.3
Paul, N.O.	30	233	139	639	21.3
Yao, Hou.	32	244	192	680	21.3

FG Percentage

	FG	FGA	PCT
Biedrins, G.S.	153	238	.643
Bynum, LAL	147	237	.620
Howard, Orl.	264	436	.606
Chandler, N.O.	142	235	.604
O'Neal, Mia.	166	282	.589
Stoudemire, Phoe.	229	392	.584
Boozer, Utah	333	594	.561
Garnett, Bos.	231	415	.557
Smith, Minn.	134	244	.549
Haywood, Wash.	114	209	.545

Rebounds

	G	OFF	DEF	TOT	AVG
Howard, Orl.	34	122	402	524	15.4
Camby, Den.	29	91	322	413	14.2
Kaman, LAC	30	98	322	420	14.0
Jefferson, Minn.	31	132	246	378	12.2
Chandler, N.O.	31	131	241	372	12.0
Boozer, Utah	33	99	277	376	11.4
Jamison, Wash.	30	79	244	323	10.8
Yao, Hou.	32	100	242	342	10.7
Okafor, Char.	30	105	211	316	10.5
Garnett, Bos.	30	59	254	313	10.4

Assists

	G	AST	AVG
Nash, Phoe.	31	385	12.4
Kidd, N.J.	30	316	10.5
Paul, N.O.	30	308	10.3
Williams, Utah	34	308	9.1
Tinsley, Ind.	29	251	8.7
Calderon, Tor.	32	260	8.1
Davis, G.S.	33	265	8.0
James, Clev.	27	204	7.6
Billups, Det.	30	226	7.5
Iverson, Den.	30	214	7.1
Williams, Mil.	30	214	7.1

MERCEDES-BENZ CHAMPIONSHIP SCORES

FIRST ROUND

Nick Watney	33-35	68
Daniel Chopra	33-36	69
Jonathan Byrd	35-35	70
Angel Cabrera	35-35	70
Aaron Baddeley	37-33	70
Mike Weir	35-36	71
Brandt Snedeker	34-37	71
Stephen Ames	35-37	72
Steve Flesch	35-37	72
Rory Sabbatini	34-38	72
Justin Leonard	38-35	73
Steve Stricker	38-35	73
Hunter Mahan	38-35	73
Woody Austin	35-38	73
Scott Verplank	34-39	73
George McNeill	39-35	74
Jim Furyk	36-38	74
Mark Wilson	38-36	74
Charles Howell III	38-36	74
Vijay Singh	36-38	74
Chad Campbell	35-40	75
Joe Ogilvie	37-38	75
Mark Calcavecchia	36-39	75
Fred Funk	39-36	75
Charley Hoffman	37-38	75
Brian Bateman	39-37	76
Zach Johnson	38-38	76
Henrik Stenson	41-35	76
K.J. Choi	41-38	79
Boo Weekley	40-40	80
Paul Goydos	38-43	81

By The Associated Press

Captains meeting this Tuesday at USSP

The Saipan Billiards Association will hold a captains meeting for the 2008 Winter Spring Season of the Budweiser SBA Open 8-Ball League on Tuesday, Jan. 8, 7pm at USS Peleliu Club in Garapan.

League secretary Charlotte Tenepere said all interested teams are invited to attend the *tete-a-tete* next week.

"It's easy to join just one simple payment of $25 for the season and you will receive a ticket to the awards banquet and buffet and a possibility of your team winning a trophy," she said.

Tenepere said if all goes well on the planning stage, the 2008 Winter Spring Season of the Saipan Billiards Association's Budweiser SBA Open 8-Ball League will uncork on Jan. 15, 2008.

For more information, call Tenepere at 233-4397 or e-mail her at charlotte@saipangames.com.

Saipan Cell Hustlers had a double victory celebration during the 5th Annual Saipan Billiards Association Banquet held last Dec. 2 at the Charley's at the Pacific Islands Club in San Antonio.

The team made up of Jerry Soriano, Senen Pangilinan, Rowell Mariano, Joey Lucido, Rommel Crisostomo, and brothers Robert and Ryan Sanciangco dominated the summer fall season of the 2006-2007 season after topping the regular season Budweiser SBA Open 8-Ball League and the encore Budweiser Cup tournament.

Hustlers finished the regular season with a 78-27 mark, followed by USSP Wat-Ever and Porky's Mixed Breed with win-loss slates of 75-30 and 67-38, respectively. It then beat all comers in the weeklong Budweiser Cup to complete the season's mini back-to-back. ***(Mark Rabago)***

K-Mart stuffs Spurs to help lift Nuggets

DENVER (AP)—Kenyon Martin scored underneath with 45 seconds left after Anthony Carter stole the ball from Tim Duncan and the Denver Nuggets turned away the San Antonio Spurs 80-77 Thursday night.

Martin, who had missed four of five games since straining his right hamstring on Dec. 20, then rejected Tony Parker at the other end for his seventh block, and Allen Iverson sank two free throws with 6.6 seconds left to give the Nuggets a three-point lead.

After a timeout, Michael Finley was off-target on a contested 3-pointer that would have tied it.

Iverson scored 29 points and Carmelo Anthony added 17 for the Nuggets.

Parker and Duncan scored 20 points for San Antonio and Finley added 18. Duncan missed 13 of 20 shots, but he did get hot in the fourth quarter.

The Spurs were without Manu Ginobili (finger) for the fourth straight game, and the Spurs missed his offense along with Duncan's usual shooting touch.

Duncan missed 14 of his first 18 shots but banked one in, sank a layup and made one underneath to give the Spurs a 75-73 lead with 2 1/2 minutes remaining.

Duncan jammed his right thumb when he was fouled by Martin midway through the third quarter. He shook it off and made one of two foul shots to pull San Antonio to 54-46, then hit a wide-open jumper with 2 minutes left in the third quarter to put the Spurs ahead 57-56.

Iverson's buzzer-beater put the Nuggets ahead 60-59 after three quarters, and the Spurs didn't hit their first field goal of the fourth quarter until Finley sank a contested jumper from the top of the key at the 7:43 mark, pulling the Spurs to 67-63.

The Spurs started out cold, missing 22 of their first 29 shots and falling behind 33-17 as Duncan was 1-for-6 from the floor and 0-for-3 from the free-throw line. But San Antonio battled back as the Nuggets went cold themselves, and the Spurs pulled to 42-40 at halftime.

It was just the type of game the Spurs wanted—but the Nuggets improved to 3-8 in games in which they score fewer than 100 points.

Duncan finished 6-for-10 from the free-throw line and had four turnovers as the Spurs fell to 25-14 in Denver since 1989-90.

Suns 104, Sonics 96

At Phoenix, Amare Stoudemire scored 34 points and grabbed 11 rebounds, and the Phoenix Suns rallied from a 20-point first-quarter deficit to beat the Seattle SuperSonics for their fourth straight victory.

The win was the Suns' 23rd of the season, the most in the Western Conference.

Steve Nash added 17 points and 10 assists for the Suns, Leandro Barbosa scored 16, and Shawn Marion had 11 points and 14 rebounds.

Rookie Kevin Durant led Seattle with 28 points, Earl Watson had a season-high 20, and former Suns' center Kurt Thomas and rookie Jeff Green each scored 14.

Blazers 115, Bulls 109

At Chicago, Jarrett Jack drove for a go-ahead basket and converted a three-point play with 19 seconds left in the second overtime and the Portland Trail Blazers outlasted the Chicago Bulls for their 15th win in 16 games.

Brandon Roy had 25 points and Travis Outlaw 21 for Portland, now 2-0 since its 13-game winning streak was ended on Monday by Utah.

Ben Gordon scored 32 points to lead the Bulls and veteran Joe Smith added a season-high 31 as Chicago dropped to 3-2 since Jim Boylan was appointed interim coach after the firing of Scott Skiles.

With the game tied in the second overtime, Gordon lost the ball as he was dribbling to set up a shot, Jack picked it up after it was tipped and drove for a go-ahead layup and was fouled. His free throw put the Trail Blazers up 111-108.

Smith just missed an attempt from in front of the basket, was fouled on the play and hit the first free throw but missed the second with 14 seconds to go.

NETTER

From Page 28

make it to some small college in the States or a university in the Philippines."

Minor, meanwhile, surprised everyone when she returned from her New Zealand trip winning two age division titles—singles and doubles—and placing second in two more.

Minor, who placed fourth in last year's Pacific Oceania Junior Championship, was invited to become a member of the International Tennis Federation Pacific Oceania Under-13 touring team in New Zealand where she competed in three tournaments.

She won the girls' 12-and-under singles crown in the Coca-Cola Waikato Junior Open 2007 then placed second in the 2007 Poverty Bay East Coast Ray White Christmas Junior Tennis Tournament after losing to teammate Tarani Kamoe in the finals.

Minor and Kamoe, who scored major upsets by beating top seeded players, teamed up to win the girls' 12-and-under doubles title in the Poverty Bay tournament.

Minor ended her New Zealand stint with another second place finish in the 2007 Auckland Christmas Tennis Tournament where she again lost to Kamoe in the finals.

Northern Marianas Athletics also had an eventful day after Gross and Bennett earned the December Male and Female Athletes of the Month honors.

Gross, who is a physical education instructor at MHS, went home with a gold and bronze in the 3rd Micronesian Athletics Championships held on Dec. 15 and 16 at the Leo Palace in Mannengon Hills at the village of Yona, Guam.

Gross, the current MAC record-holder in javelin throw, again won the gold in the same event by with his throw covering a distance of 54 meters. He won the gold during the 2005 MAC on Saipan where he established a new record of 56.26 meters.

Gross then grabbed the bronze in the shotput with a throw of 10.36m and nearly won another bronze in the discus where he placed fourth with a distance of 31.08m.

He is expected to be a strong contender in winning any medals for CNMI when the Commonwealth hosts this year's Oceania Athletics Association Area Championships and Grand Prix Series on Saipan from June 21 to 28.

Bennett made it two in a row for the NMA when she won the female award after her exploits also in the Guam athletics tournament. She won a silver and two bronze medals in the MAC.

Bennett is also in her second year in athletics where she competed in the open division. Despite having little time to prepare for the MAC, Bennett helped the CNMI's 4x400m relay team win the silver then added the bronze in the 4x10m relay.

She added an individual bronze medal in the 200m sprints with a time of 27.95 seconds and placed fourth in her favorite 100m dash, 13.42 seconds.

Bennett is the current CNMI 100m run record holder when she clocked in at 13.16 seconds at the 11th IAAF World Championships on Aug. 26 at Osaka City, Osaka, Japan.

Those who wound up with honorable mentions for the month were Christian Miller (tennis), Jeremy Williams (bowling), Jacque Wonenberg (athletics), Sarah Johnson (swimming), and Emi Williams (bowling).

KING

From Page 28

from the roll-off will then advance to play in a nine-game roll-off the following Sunday, Jan. 13. Joining them are the Top 12 bowlers based on the Bowler Ranking System.

The nine-game roll-off will determine the top six bowlers who will advance to the step ladder finals.

Fee is $15 for the elimination round. Players who competed in the elimination round and advanced to the nine-game roll-off will then pay $30, while $40 will be charged to the Top 12 bowlers for the nine-game roll-off.

The Queen competition will feature an eight-game roll-off tomorrow to determine the top six bowlers for the stepladder finals. Entry fee is $40.

The stepladder finals for both the King and Queen competition will feature the No. 3 and No. 6 bowlers facing off, and the No. 4 and No. 5 bowlers battling. The winner of the No. 3-No. 6 contest will then face the No. 1 seed bowler, while the No. 2 seed will face the winner of the No. 4-No. 5 bout in the semifinals.

The two survivors will then battle for all the marbles in the final game. If the No. 1 bowler falters in the semis, the bowler will automatically place third. If the No. 1 bowler succeeds, the two that falter in the semis will play for third and fourth.

SBA will also crown its first Prince or Princess of the Year. All junior bowlers that have competed in at least three of the monthly tournaments are eligible to play.

After paying a fee of $25, youth bowlers will compete in a six-game roll-off on Jan. 7 to determine who advances to the stepladder finals.

The stepladder finals will feature the No. 1 and No. 4 bowlers squaring off, and the No. 2 and No. 3 bowlers battling. The two winners will advance to play for the title, with the two that lose playing for third and fourth place. Like the King and Queen competition, though, if the No. 1 seed falls in the semis, the bowler will automatically take third place.

For more information, email Ross Zapanta at zapanta@pticom.com or sbasaipan@yahoo.com.

HEO

From Page 28

Heo is also aiming to enter the ITF world junior ranking by 2008 and to someday represent Oceania and play in the Junior Davis Cup.

The ITF has granted Heo an exemption allowing him to suit up for the CNMI in ITF junior tennis competitions in September. Heo previously was barred from representing the CNMI in ITF junior events since he does not hold a CNMI or U.S. passport.

The ITF Junior Competitions Committee agreed to make an exception on Heo's case despite the 15-year-old's status of not holding a Northern Marianas or U.S. passport. One of ITF's eligibility criteria is that a player of a country that he/she is representing must hold the same passport.

Heo's exception, however, is limited to ITF junior competitions and if he wishes to play in other ITF events, he must once again re-apply for another exemption.

Heo's case marks the first time ITF has granted an exception to a player from the Pacific Oceania region.

Clemens: Injections were lidocaine, B-12

Roger Clemens said former trainer Brian McNamee injected him with the painkiller lidocaine and the vitamin B-12 - not any performance-enhancing drugs.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Warren Sapp tells Raiders he's retiring

Warren Sapp announced his retirement on Thursday, ending the career of one of the best defensive tackles to play in the NFL.

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Heo in Round of 32 in Shepparton

By JON PEREZ
REPORTER

Tennis wonder kid Ji Hoon Heo barged into the Round of 32 of two age divisions in the 2008 Ducats G.V. Junior Tennis Tournament in Shepparton, Australia Thursday.

Heo is competing in his first Australian junior championship tournament after being invited to become a member of the International Tennis Federation Pacific-Oceania Junior touring team late last year.

The 15-year-old Heo first played in the boys' 18-and-under singles where he defeated Lewis Ahern of East Allbury, New South Wales in straight sets, 6-2, 6-4, to make it into the Round of 32.

His next opponent is Calvin Patterson, who scored a stunning 6-2, 6-1 upset of 15th-seed Jordan Cowling of Ferry Creek.

Heo and Patterson were scheduled to play at 10am yesterday with the winner facing the winner of the match between fourth-ranked Orrin Shaw and Juston Gugliemino in the 3pm game in the Round of 16.

Heo opened the tournament with a hard-earned 7-6, 6-3, first round win over Andrew Donaldson of Parkhurst, Queensland on Thursday.

The Marianas Baptist Academy student also made waves in the 16-and-under division where he also made it through the Round of 32.

The Korean-born netter drew a bye in the first round then met Lewis Tenace, who is a 6-1, 6-4 winner against Adib Golshan, in the Round of 64. He breezed through a 6-0, 6-3 win over Tenace to advance into the Round of 32.

Heo is expected to have a tough time in his scheduled Round of 32 match since he will be facing top seed Ethan Scobie of Alice Springs, Northern Territory.

Scobia also drew a bye in the opening round then pulled off a 6-2, 6-3 decision over Werribee's Patrick Lake to arrange a 5pm match with Heo. Their game was being played at press time and results were not yet available as of this writing.

A total of 128 players are entered each in the 18-and-under and 16-and-under age groups.

Heo, who is arguably the CNMI's top male junior netter, said in an earlier interview that competing in Australia would open up a lot of good opportunities for him as he aims to make it big in the tennis world.

Heo received an invitation to join the ITF Pacific-Oceania Junior touring team in Australia last October. He left Saipan last Dec. 27 to join a group of Under-18 players that will travel around Australia from Dec. 30 to Jan. 18.

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JON PEREZ

Ji Hoon Heo waits for the serve of Jeff Race in this file photo taken during their finals match in the 2007 DFS Micronesian Tennis Tournament at the Pacific Islands Club.

King, Queen of Lanes finale tomorrow

By MARK RABAGO
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The Saipan Bowling Association will hold its King and Queen of the Lanes season-ending tournament tomorrow, Jan. 6, at the Capital Bowling Center.

Bowlers who rank in the top 36 for men and top 24 for women are qualified to compete, however, in the case that male bowlers ranked 13th to 36th do not register for the three-game elimination round, a lower-ranking bowler may qualify.

Only bowlers that have competed in six of the 12 roll-offs in 2007 can suit up for the King competition, while bowlers that competed in at least four tournaments are eligible for the Queen contest.

For the King of the Lanes competition, those ranked 13th to 36th will bowl in a three-game roll-off. The Top 12 bowlers

See KING on Page 27

Netter, cager, tracksters grab December plum

Minor

Gross

Bennet

Cruz

By JON PEREZ
REPORTER

All-around junior cager Jericho Cruz, tennis teen sensation Thea Minor, and veteran internationalists Nick Gross and Yvonne Bennett earned the last monthly honors given by the Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association in 2007.

Cruz and Minor were named the Male and Female Student Athletes of the Month, while Gross and Bennett earned the Male and Female Athletes plum for December given by NMASA during their monthly meeting Thursday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium conference room.

Cruz, a 16-year-old sophomore at Marianas High School, is arguably the CNMI's top young basketball talent right now.

A prolific scorer and a high-flying slasher, Cruz's all-around skills and height creates mismatches for opposing team's defenders whenever he is inside the court.

Cruz was at his usual dominating form during the 17th Saipan Rotary Club 18-and-under Youth Basketball League where he topped the scoring department to virtually run away with three individual awards.

He was named co-regular season most valuable player along with the Southern Sonics' Jon Lim. He was the league's scoring champion averaging 24.7 points a game to lead the CNMI Junior Nationals to an 11-1 record behind the 12-0 slate of the Sonics, which won the pennant.

Cruz then scored 21 points, mostly in the second half where he helped neutralize the Sonics' comeback bid, to provide offensive support to Keoni Chariton's 28 markers in the Nationals' 98-91 victory over the Southern crew.

Basketball Association of the Northern Mariana Islands president Elias Rangamar said Cruz has National team potential. "More importantly has a great opportunity to

See NETTER on Page 27

By FRED BOWEN
Special to
The Washington Post

Fred Bowen writes KidsPost's sports opinion column and is an author of sports novels for kids.

A goal for 2008: Mix it up a little

The new year is a time for resolutions—promises you make to yourself for the days ahead.

Adults usually resolve to lose weight, exercise more or give up smoking.

Kids who play sports can make resolutions, too. Here are some to think about for 2008.

■ Spend more time playing sports and less time watching sports. Every weekend there are dozens of football and basketball games on television. It's OK to watch one or two, but don't forget to go outside and play, maybe throw a football around or shoot some baskets. That's the way to stay healthy and become a better athlete. Don't be one of those video-game kids who think that Backyard Baseball and Madden NFL football are actual sports.

■ Learn the history of the games you enjoy. For instance, if you love lacrosse, visit the Lacrosse Museum and National Hall of Fame in Baltimore. You can see how the sport advanced from players wielding heavy sticks made from trees to the fast-moving, space-age game that's so popular today.

■ Read a book about a great old-time player such as slugger Henry Aaron or running back Walter Payton. Not all of the great athletes are playing now. The stories of the games and players that your parents and grandparents watched are super-exciting. I love baseball history so much that I named my dog Matty after the great National League pitcher Christy "Matty" Mathewson, who won 373 games in the early 1900s.

■ Don't complain about the referees and umpires. It's easy to blame them if your team loses, but that won't help you get better. This year, learn to accept the officials' calls, good and bad, as part of the game. And remember to thank them afterward. It's not an easy job.

■ Try a new sport. Playing soccer, basketball or anything else year-round is one way to get hurt or become bored with a sport. Mix it up in 2008. Learning to play a new sport is fun and usually builds your skills in other areas. Tennis is great for hand-eye coordination. Skateboarding helps your balance. Golf forces you to concentrate under pressure.

■ Don't take sports so seriously. Yes, it's a great way to stay healthy, meet new people and have fun. But some kids go overboard, playing on several teams and going to tournaments every weekend. Make sure you take time for reading or learning to play a musical instrument or just hanging out with friends and family. That way, you will have a great 2008.